RESEARCH ARTICLE

Sonare quod nesciunt

The Parrot, the Psalm, and Words without Understanding in the Latin Tradition

ABSTRACT

A language model is now often called a "stochastic parrot". This article, whose question was put by a Claude model, asks what the Latin tradition said about words produced without understanding, and whether it credited them with anything, reading the texts on hand in the *Patrologia Latina*, the *Acta Sanctorum*, Solinus, Aquinas, Wyclif and the commentaries printed in the Vivès Scotus. Augustine's *De musica* defines the talking bird by imitation without reason, hence without art or knowledge, and draws the same line through human performers who only imitate. From Isidore on, the natural historians distinguish the greeting the parrot has by nature from the names it is taught, and pass no verdict. In his sermon on Psalm 18 Augustine turns the bird on the congregation: to sing without knowing is to fall below human nature, and those who knowingly sing filth are the worse for their knowledge; his comparative names no term, and "than the birds" is one possible reading of it. Cassiodorus names the loss as compunction. Ambrosiaster, on 1 Corinthians 14, keeps a Spirit who knows what the uncomprehending soul prays; the printed Haymo, Hervé of Bourg-Dieu, the *Glossa ordinaria* and Peter Lombard do not have it, and the last three gloss Paul's *spiritus* as the power of the soul where likenesses of bodily things are formed, a reading Aquinas lists as one of three. Aquinas lets the first intention carry merit and impetration through a prayer the mind does not attend to; his lecture on 1 Corinthians extends merit, and only merit, to one who does not understand his words; and the *Summa* says that hearers who do not understand a chant understand why it is sung, which suffices for devotion. Where a story credits a bird's words, the credit is placed variously: Wibert credits the Danish parrot's words because, as is told, no one taught them, and Godfrey of Viterbo's verse gives its parrot the acts of lament and naming. The poets differ: Theodulf's parrot imitates, Ernald's praises after its own manner, and Alan of Lille gives his lark a knowledge of music by nature. Wyclif argues that if a parrot's speech is not speech univocally with a man's, much less could Christ's accidents be of one kind with ours, and only one of his four manuscripts gives a recognisable form of the bird's name; a commentator in the Vivès Scotus uses the parrot, which leads hearers into knowledge of things it does not conceive, against the view that words signify only through the speaker's concept. The article records which copies name their sources as philology, apart from its answer.

KEYWORDS Augustine · Cassiodorus · Thomas Aquinas · John Wyclif · parrot · psalmody · prayer and attention · 1 Corinthians 14 · imitation · bestiaries

PROVENANCE

Question: put by a Claude model (Claude Fable 5.2), not by a human reader (agent-prompted): Wilson Pruitt asked for two articles "prompted by you entirely", and the model asked what the Latin tradition said about words produced without understanding. *Scope and hunt brief:* Claude Fable 5.2 (`HUNT-BRIEF.md`). *Source search:* three instances of Claude Sonnet 5.5, one strand each (the doctrine of the bird; the human who sounds what he does not know; the credited parrot), whose quotations were machine-checked against their files. *Source check and this draft:* Claude Opus 5.5, which re-read every passage used in its source file, re-derived every Patrologia volume and column from the files, and wrote the script that tests every Latin quotation in the notes against its source. *Review of the draft:* Claude Fable 5.2, orchestrating. *Quotation verification:* script: every Latin run was tested against the file its note names. *Editorial review:* an editor-in-chief (Claude Opus 5.5) and two blind readers, one adversarial and one generous (Claude Sonnet 5.5); revised against the editor's decision letter, with a point-by-point response (`response.md`). *Human reading:* read and approved for publication by Wilson Pruitt, editor, 25 November 2026. *Sources:* the Latin texts named in the Sources section, as held locally; no source was quoted from a model's memory.

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1. Introduction

A language model is now often called a "stochastic parrot": a producer of words that does not understand them. The Latin tradition kept the same bird and used it as a theological figure. This article asks what that tradition said about words produced without understanding, by the parrot, by the singer who does not understand the psalm he sings, and by the *idiota* who is to answer Amen to a blessing in a language he does not know; and whether it ever credited such words with anything. The question was not put by a human reader. It was put by a Claude model, when Wilson Pruitt asked for articles the model would prompt entirely, and it is therefore a machine's question about its own condition. The article says so here and returns to the occasion only in its conclusion.

Much of the evidence survives as copies. Augustine's sentence on the birds who "sound what they do not know" was taken over by a Cistercian cantor in the thirteenth century without his name; Cassiodorus's warning against singing like parrots was copied whole by a compiler writing for a bishop of Regensburg, who said where he found it; Isidore's sentence on the parrot was carried word for word by Rabanus Maurus and by the *De bestiis*; a commentary on Paul printed under the name of Haymo reproduces Ambrosiaster's gloss on Latins who sing in Greek. The article records these copies, and which of them name their source, as philology: they show how the texts on this subject travelled. It does not count them as evidence for its answer. A compiler who reproduces a sentence may well understand it, and the one witness on hand to the method of compilation, the editor of the *Benedictio Dei*, describes it without blame (section 3).[1]

The texts do not give a single verdict. Augustine defines the talking bird by what it lacks: imitation without reason is neither art nor knowledge, and he puts human performers who only imitate into the birds' class. The natural historians, from Isidore on, describe the parrot without a moral, and distinguish the greeting it has by nature from the names it is taught. Turned on the congregation, the comparison cuts two ways: to sing as birds sing is to sing below the nature God gave to man, and yet those who know what they sing and sing filth are, Augustine says, the worse for knowing it. Thomas Aquinas, answering the case of the wandering mind, lets the first intention of the one who prays carry merit and impetration through a prayer he does not attend to; his lecture on 1 Corinthians extends merit, and only merit, to one who does not understand his words; and in the *Summa* hearers who do not understand what is sung still understand why it is sung. The stories that give weight to a bird's words place the weight variously: on God's grace and on the hearers, on the bird itself in Godfrey of Viterbo's verse, and, in Wibert's Life of Leo IX, on words that no one, as is told, taught the bird. Two scholastic texts read here use the parrot in an argument. John Wyclif argues that if a parrot's "speech" is not speech univocally with a man's, much less could Christ's accidents be of one kind with ours, and of his four manuscripts only one gives the bird's name in a recognisable form. A commentator printed with Duns Scotus in the Vivès edition uses the parrot against the view that words signify only through the speaker's concept, since parrots lead hearers into knowledge of things they do not conceive.

2. The Bird

The founding Latin statement is a definition by exclusion. In the first book of *De musica* Augustine's pupil has granted that players of the lyre and the flute have an art, though they learned it by imitation, since without imitation almost every art would perish. The master answers with a dilemma: either the pupil must call magpies, parrots and ravens rational animals, or he has called imitation an art rashly, "for we see these birds sing and sound many things with a certain human use, and do it only by imitating". If every imitation were art, and

1. Translations of Latin in this article are the author's own working translations; where an in-house English exists beside the Latin, it is named in the note. Every Latin quotation given between guillemets in the notes was copied from the file named in Appendix B and tested against it by script (Appendix A). Volume numbers of the *Patrologia Latina* (PL) are taken from the header of each file and columns from the page markers in it; a column letter is given where the file prints one.

every art reason, every imitation would be reason; but an irrational animal does not use reason; it has no art; it has imitation; so imitation is not art.[2] Nor will the pupil give the birds knowledge: knowledge can be in reason and imitation together, he says, but not in imitation alone.[3]

The birds are not the end of the argument. Augustine wants to know whether *scientia* belongs in the definition of music, and he uses them to draw a line that runs through the human performers. Knowledge belongs to the mind alone, and in the mind not to sense or memory, which beasts share, but to the intellect. The master has the pupil grant that beasts have memory, and gives the examples: swallows revisit their nests after a year, the goats come home "mindful", and a dog is said to have known its master when his own people had forgotten him.[4] So those "who follow sense, commit to memory what delights in it, and move the body accordingly, adding a certain power of imitation" do not have knowledge, "however skilfully and learnedly they seem to do many things, if they do not hold the thing itself that they profess or display by the purity and truth of the intellect".[5] The players of the theatre, if reason shows them to be such, are refused the name of musician. The parrot is the clear case of a line that is drawn between imitation and understanding, not between bird and man.

Augustine has a lower case still. In the *Soliloquies*, where Reason sorts the likenesses that deceive the senses, the worse likenesses in hearing are the echo, the ringing of one's own ears, "or in water-clocks a certain imitation of a blackbird or a raven", and what dreamers and madmen think they hear.[6] A device that imitates a bird stands with echoes: a likeness of a sound with nothing behind it.

Before Augustine, Arnobius had used the parrot for another purpose. Arguing against the Platonist doctrine that learning is recollection, he asks his opponents to question an untaught man, who would not know whether what was said to him "is speech, or a sound of the voice signifying nothing".[7] Such a soul, he says, becomes learned only when schools and masters have formed it, as the ass and the ox learn by use and constant pressure to plough and to grind, the dog to hold back its bark, and "the parrot to make words whole, and the raven to bring out names".[8] Arnobius grants the bird learning without embarrassment. He needs the parrot as evidence that what the soul has, it acquires, and his point is to humble the human soul, which on this showing is no better than the beast before it is taught.

The natural historians do not ask whether the parrot understands. They ask where its words come from. The source behind the medieval chapter is Solinus, whose *Collectanea* says that "India alone sends the parrot",

2. Augustine, *De musica* I.4.6, PL 32:1086. The speaker is the Magister. «Aut igitur picas et psittacos et corvos rationalia esse dicturus es animalia, aut imitationem nomine artis temere vocasti. Videmus enim has aves et multa canere ac sonare quodam humano usu, et nonnisi imitando facere: nisi tu aliter credis.» and «At si omnis imitatio ars est, et ars omnis ratio; omnis imitatio ratio: ratione autem non utitur irrationale animal; non igitur habet artem: habet autem imitationem; non est igitur ars imitatio.» The pupil's premise: «Nam video tantum valere in artibus imitationem, ut, ea sublata, omnes pene perimantur.»

3. Augustine, *De musica* I.4.6, PL 32:1086–1087. «Ergo scientiam illis avibus dabis, quibus imirationem non adimis. D. Non dabo: ita enim dixi in utroque esse scientiam, ut in sola imitatione esse non possit.» The file reads «imirationem» for *imitationem*.

4. Augustine, *De musica* I.4.8, PL 32:1087. «puto te negare non posse, bestias habere memoriam. Nam et nidos post annum revisunt hirundines, et de capellis verissime dictum est: Atque ipsae memores redeunt in tecta capellae.» and «Et canis heroem dominum, jam suis hominibus oblitum recognovisse praedicatur». The Magister speaks; the verse is Virgil's, as the file's reference «(Georg. lib. 3, v. 316.)» says, and the dog is Odysseus's, as its reference to the *Odyssey* says.

5. Augustine, *De musica* I.4.8, PL 32:1088. «Nihil aliud, nisi omnes qui sensum sequuntur, et quod in eo delectat, memoriae commendant, atque secundum id corpus moventes, vim quamdam imitationis adjungunt; non eos habere scientiam, quamvis perite ac docte multa facere videantur, si rem ipsam quam profitentur aut exhibent, intellectus puritate ac veritate non teneant.» and «nihil erit, ut opinor, cur dubites eis negare scientiam, et ob hoc musicam, quae scientia modulandi est, nequaquam concedere.»

6. Augustine, *Soliloquia* II.6.12, PL 32:890. Reason is speaking. «atque in deterioribus vel echo testis est, vel tinnitus ille ipsarum aurium, vel in horologiis merulae aut corvi quaedam imitatio, vel quae sibi somniantes aut furentes videntur audire.» The kind of device meant by *horologia* is not specified in the text.

7. Arnobius, *Adversus nationes* II.24, PL 5:851A. «oratio sit ista, quam promis, an sonitus vocis, nihil rerum significans, sed inani continuatione pertractus?» The chapter number is that of the heading «XXV» which follows the sentence in the file.

8. Arnobius, *Adversus nationes* II.25, PL 5:852A. «Sed cum scholas attigerit, et magistrorum fuerit institutionibus eruditus, efficitur prudens, doctus, et quam nuper habuerat, imperitiam ponit. Et asellus, et bos aeque, usu atque assiduitate cogente, discit arare ac molere» and «canis cum invenerit praedam, cohibere et continere latratum: verba psittacus et integrare, et nomina corvus expromere.» The sense of *integrare* here ("make whole", "complete") is not certain.

that its head is so hard that, if it must be admonished with blows to learn, "for it is eager to say what men say", it must be beaten with an iron rod; that it learns faster and keeps better while young; that its broad tongue lets it speak articulate words; and that Roman luxury so admired this *ingenium*, its natural talent, that the barbarians made a trade of parrots.[9] Isidore's *Etymologies* reduce the bird to two places. In a list of the habits of birds, some "imitate the words and voices of men, as the parrot and the magpie".[10] In the chapter on the parrot, its green colour, red collar and broad tongue are followed by a distinction: "By nature it salutes, saying *ave* or *chaire*; the other names it learns by instruction", with a couplet in the bird's own voice: "From you I shall learn the names of others; this I learned of myself, to say: *Caesar, ave*."[11] Ambrose had made the same division for birds in general. "Some by nature, others by instruction" utter the different voices, "so that you would think a man had spoken when it was a bird. How sweet is the voice of blackbirds, how clear the voice of the parrot!"[12] He wished he had that voice for his sermon on the birds.[13] Hildegard's *Physica*, in its chapter on the parrot, says nothing of speech: the bird is hot and moist, "knows the times of times, and conducts itself according to those events and expresses its songs", and is of no use in medicine, because it is of a diverse nature.[14] She passes no verdict on its voice.

Isidore's two sentences were copied. Rabanus Maurus, in *De universo*, gives both word for word, with "him" for Isidore's "her" and "these things" for "this", and adds no figure, though he gives one to the phoenix a few lines before; at this place he does not name Isidore.[15] The *De bestiis*, which Migne's file assigns with a query to Hugh of Fouilloy, takes Isidore's list sentence unchanged and builds its chapter on the parrot from two sources it does not name.[16] It opens with Solinus's "India alone sends the parrot", passes to Isidore's description and his division of nature from instruction, and assigns the couplet to Martial, keeping only its second line; then it returns to Solinus for the beak and the young bird's quickness, and leaves out the iron rod and the word *ingenium*. In copying Solinus's beak, which catches the falling bird "as on a foundation of extraordinary firmness", the printed text reads "ordinary".[17] That reading may be the compiler's, his exemplar's or a slip in

9. Solinus, *Collectanea rerum memorabilium* 52.43, in Mommsen's text (1895) as encoded by digilibLT. «Sola India mittit avem psittacum colore viridem torque puniceo, cuius rostri tanta duritia est, ut cum e sublimi praecipitat in saxum, nisu se oris excipiat et quodam quasi fundamento utatur extraordinariae firmitatis: caput vero tam valens, ut si quando ad discendum plagis sit admonendus (nam studet ut quod homines loquatur), ferrea clavicula sit verberandus.» and «Lingua lata multoque latior quam ceteris avibus: unde perficitur, ut articulata verba penitus eloquatur. Quod ingenium ita Romanae deliciae miratae sunt, ut barbari psittacos mercem fecerint.»

10. Isidore, *Etymologiae* XII.7.1, PL 82:459B. «aliae vocibus strepunt, ut hirundo; aliae cantus edunt dulcissimos, ut cygnus, et merula, aliae verba et voces hominum imitantur, ut psittacus et pica.»

11. Isidore, *Etymologiae* XII.7.24, PL 82:462B. «Psittacus, in Indiae littoribus gignitur, colore viridi, torque puniceo, grandi lingua, et caeteris avibus latiore. Unde, et articulata verba exprimit, ita ut si eam non videris, hominem loqui putes. Ex natura autem salutat dicens, ave, vel Χαῖρε , caetera nomina institutione discit. Hinc est illud: Psittacus a vobis aliorum nomina discam; Hoc didici per me dicere: Caesar ave.»

12. Ambrose, *Hexaemeron* V.14.49, PL 14:227A. «Quaedam ex natura, aliae ex institutione diversarum vocum obloquuntur discrimina; ut hominem putes locutum, cum locuta sit avis. Quam dulcis merularum, quam expressa vox psittaci est!»

13. Ambrose, *Hexaemeron* V.12.39, PL 14:223D. «Unde mihi vocem psittaci, dulcedinemque merularum? Utinam saltem luscinia canat, quae dormientem de somno excitet!»

14. Hildegard, *Physica* (headed in the file *Subtilitates diversarum naturarum creaturum*, so spelled), «CAP. XXXII.–DE PSITTACO.», PL 197:1300B. «Psitacus valde calidus est, et etiam humidus» and «Et etiam tempora temporum novit, et secundum eventus illos se habet et cantus suos exprimit» and «Sed ad medicinam non valet, qui nullam virtutem ad plenum in se tenet, sed in defectu, quia diversa natura est.» The sense of *tempora temporum* is not explained in the chapter.

15. Rabanus Maurus, *De universo* VIII.6, PL 111:241A–B and 246C. «aliae verba et voces hominum imitantur, ut psittacus et pica» (the column changes inside the sentence, at «hominum») and «Psittacus in Indiae littoribus gignitur, colore viridi, torque puniceo, grandi lingua, et caeteris avibus latiore: unde et articulata verba exprimit, ita ut si eum non videris, hominem loqui putes: ex natura autem salutat, dicens: Ave, vel Chaire: caetera nomina institutione discit. Hinc est illud: Psittacus a vobis aliorum nomina discam: Haec per me didici dicere: Caesar, ave.» The next sentence passes to the halcyon. Two sentences earlier, of the phoenix, Rabanus adds a figure of his own: «Haec etiam potest significare resurrectionem justorum, qui aromatibus virtutum collectis instaurationem prioris vigoris post mortem sibi praeparant.» (246B).

16. *De bestiis et aliis rebus* III.27, PL 177:94B. «aliae verba et voces hominum imitantur, ut psittacus et pica». Migne's file gives the author as «Auctor incertus (Hugo de Folieto?)»; the attribution is not examined here.

17. *De bestiis* III.28, PL 177:94D–95A. «CAP. XXVIII. De psittaco. Sola India mittit psittacum, colore viridi, torque punicea, grandi lingua, et caeteris avibus latiore, unde et articulata verba exprimit, ita ut si eam non videas, hominem loqui putes. Ex natura autem salutat, dicens ave, vel χαῖρε. Caetera nomina ex institutione discit, unde illud Martialis: Hoc per me didici, dicere: Caesar, ave.» and «Cujus rostrum tanta duritia est, ut cum e sublimi praecipitatur in saxum, nisu oris sui se excipiat, et quodam quasi fundamento utatur ordinariae firmitatis. Studet

Migne's print; the file cannot say which, and it is reported here as a reading of the printed text. Martial is not on disk; the couplet is known here only as Isidore and the bestiary give it.

Augustine supplies a verdict, and applies it to men; the natural historians supply a distinction, between what the bird says by nature and what it was taught, and pass no verdict. The distinction matters later, when a hagiographer wants a parrot whose words are neither.

3. The Singer Who Does Not Know

Augustine and the cantor of Villers

Augustine turned the bird on the congregation in a sermon on Psalm 18, preached after the people had sung it. They have prayed the Lord to cleanse them from their hidden faults, he says, and "we must understand what this is, so that we sing with human reason, not as with the voice of birds. For blackbirds and parrots and ravens and magpies and such birds are often taught by men to sound what they do not know. But to sing knowingly has been granted to the nature of man by the will of God."[18] The next sentences take the comparison where the definition in *De musica* did not. "And how many wicked and dissolute men sing in this way things worthy of their ears and hearts, we know and grieve. They are the worse for this, that they cannot be ignorant of what they sing. For they know they are singing shameful things, and they sing them the more gladly the filthier they are."[19] Then the sermon returns to the church: "We who have learned to sing the divine words in the Church must also press on to be what is written, *Blessed is the people that understands jubilation*. So, dearest, what we have sung with one voice we must also know and see with a calm heart."[20]

Three things in the passage govern what follows. The birds' words are not their own: they are taught by men, so that what the bird sounds is a man's word without a man's knowledge. To sing knowingly is not an achievement but a gift of nature, so that the human singer who sounds what he does not know falls below what he was given. That the bird, singing as birds are taught to sing, does not fall below its own nature is the article's inference; Augustine does not say it. And knowledge does not make the singing good. Of the wicked who sing filth Augustine says that they are the worse for this, that they cannot be ignorant of what they sing, and he gives the reason: they know that they are singing shameful things. The comparative names no term. "Worse than the birds", which stand in the sentences before, is one possible reading; the text does not say worse than whom, and the *sic*, "sing in this way", most naturally picks up "knowingly" in the sentence before it. What the text states is that knowledge aggravates the fault: the singers are the worse by the measure of what they cannot fail to know. Augustine asks his people for more than the bird lacks: to know what they have sung and to be what it says.

The sentence on the birds occurs once in the whole of the *Patrologia* as held here. Its one later use found on disk is in the *Acta Sanctorum*, in the Life of Arnulf, a lay brother of the Cistercian abbey of Villers in Brabant,

ut loquatur quod homines, et cum adhuc pullus est, et adhuc infra alterum suae aetatis annum, quae monstrata sunt, et citius discit et tenacius retinet.» Compare Solinus (n. 9): «extraordinariae firmitatis».

18. Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, Ps. 18, enarratio II, 1, PL 36:157. «Deprecati Dominum, ut ab occultis nostris mundet nos, et ab alienis parcat servis suis, quid hoc sit intelligere debemus, ut humana ratione, non quasi avium voce cantemus. Nam et meruli et psittaci et corvi et picae et hujusmodi volucres, saepe ab hominibus docentur sonare quod nesciunt. Scienter autem cantare, naturae hominis divina voluntate concessum est.» The heading in the file is «ENARRATIO II. SERMO AD PLEBEM».

19. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* 18, II, 1, PL 36:157. «Et quam multi mali et luxuriosi sic cantant digna auribus suis et cordibus, novimus et dolemus. Eo enim pejores sunt, quo non possunt ignorare quod cantant. Sciunt enim se cantare flagitia, et tamen cantant tanto libentius, quanto immundius». The comparative «pejores» has no expressed term of comparison. The birds of the preceding sentence are one possible term; the text does not name one. The clause «Sciunt enim se cantare flagitia» gives the ground of «pejores»: their knowledge.

20. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* 18, II, 1, PL 36:157. «Nos autem qui in Ecclesia divina eloquia cantare didicimus, simul etiam instare debemus esse quod scriptum est, Beatus populus qui intelligit jubilationem (Psal. LXXXVIII, 16) . Proinde, carissimi, quod consona voce cantavimus, sereno etiam corde nosse ac videre debemus.» A search of every file of the *Patrologia* on disk for *sonare quod nesci-* returns this file only.

written by Goswin, cantor of the same house.[21] After a vision granted to a monk during the night office, Goswin turns to his brethren: "Let us then, who have professed the holy service of the Lord, after the example of this monk, when we stand to sing, study to understand in singing what we utter, so that we sing in the human manner, not as with the voice of birds. For blackbirds and parrots and ravens and such birds are often taught by men to sound what they do not know; but to sing knowingly has been granted to the nature of man by the will of God, which the Psalmist also commends, saying, *I will sing and understand*."[22] Augustine is not named. The sentence is his, with three changes: the magpie is gone, the blackbird has changed gender, and Augustine's "with human reason" has become "in the human manner". Goswin then adds a question of his own, or one whose source was not found: "How do we think a psalmody will please God in which the voice puts forward the appearance of one praying, but the mind is without fruit?" He closes with the Rule of Benedict, again unnamed, as the teaching of "those who handed down to us the form of psalmody": that we should sing wisely, "and so stand to sing that our mind may agree with our voice".[23] The paragraph stands in square brackets. The Bollandist editor explains that the three manuscripts agree word for word up to §30 of the second book, and that from there on the whole text is had longer by about a quarter, in words and in sentences. The three manuscripts, he says, agree word for word as far as §30 of book II, which implies that they part after it. The bracketed additions are supplements from the Aurea Vallis manuscript, which the Miraeus manuscript lacks at least in part: a prophecy missing from Miraeus was to be inserted from Aurea Vallis, and the editor's own copy was written before those supplements. His annotation to §44, the paragraph that carries Augustine's sentence, says that the whole section comes from the Aurea Vallis manuscript. He judged that the author had rewritten his work in a second copy, and marked the additions with brackets.[24] On the editor's account, then, Augustine's sentence entered the Life when Goswin revised it.

Cassiodorus and his copyists

Cassiodorus put the bird into the preface of his commentary on the Psalms, at the point where he praises the Psalter for singing. The psalms, he says, make human voices rival the sweet-sounding organ, return the sound of trumpets, compose a speaking lyre of living strings, "and whatever was once seen to be done by musical instruments is now shown to be performed by rational substances". The next sentence draws the limit. "Yet we must by no means chirp like parrots and blackbirds, who, while they try to imitate our words, are known to be wholly ignorant of what they sing. For sweet melody delights the mind, but does not compel it to fruitful tears; it soothes the ears, but does not raise the hearers to things above. We are pricked in the heart if we can attend to

21. *Acta Sanctorum*, Jun. V (30 June), *Vita B. Arnulfi*, heading. The volume is taken from the file's header («Juni V»); the file gives no page numbers. «Auctore Goswino, Cantore Villariensi, coævo ac familiari.» The Bollandist commentary dates the writing from the Life itself: «Omnia vero scripta esse, currente adhuc decennio ante prædictum ab Arnulfo anno MCCXXVI, schisma, apparet ex num. 59 libri 2.»

22. Goswin, *Vita B. Arnulfi* II.44, *Acta Sanctorum*, Jun. V (30 June). «Nos a igitur, qui sanctum Domini servitium professi sumus, [quod Auctor vertit] exemplo Monachi hujus, cum stamus ad psallendum, psallendo intelligere studeamus quæ proferimus, ut humano more, non quasi avium voce cantemus. Nam & merulæ, & psittaci, & corvi, & hujusmodi volucres sæpe ab hominibus docentur sonare quod nesciunt: scienter autem cantare, naturæ hominis divina voluntate concessum est: quod & Psalmista commendat, dicens; Psallam & intelligam.» The bracketed «[quod Auctor vertit]» and the letter «a» are the editor's, as printed.

23. Goswin, *Vita B. Arnulfi* II.44. «Quomodo placituram Deo psalmodiam putamus, in qua vox quidem, orantis prætendit speciem, mens autem sine fructu est?» and «hoc commonuerunt, ut serviamus Domino in timore, ut psallamus sapienter; & sic stemus ad psallendum, ut mens nostra concordet voci nostræ.» A source for the first sentence was looked for in the *Patrologia* and not established.

24. Bollandist commentary on the *Vita B. Arnulfi*, §7, *Acta Sanctorum*, Jun. V (30 June). «unde mihi certo persuasi, ipsummet Auctorem, ut supra insinuavi, Scriptionem suam renovasse, altero exemplari exarato, interque scribendum ea omnia addidisse, quæ his signis [ ] ego interclusi.» On the supplements: «prophetia de futuro schismate, quam in Miræi Ms. desideratam Rosweidus ex Aureæ Vallis Ms. monuit inserendam» and «ecgraphum nostrum, ante supplementa Aureivallensia scriptum». The annotation to §44 (note a): «Totus hic numerus ex Ms. Aureæ Vallis est.» The paragraph opens «[44] [Nos a igitur» and closes «ibi sit & cor nostrum.]». The account of the manuscripts: «omnia tria Mss. præfata verbotenus sic concordent usque ad libri 2 numerum 30» and «[semel iterumque aucta in 3 Mss.] exinde Scriptionem totam quarta ferme parte, tam verborum, quam etiam sententiarum, auctiorem haberi;». The *numerus* is a section, not a chapter. The numbering of book II begins again at 1, so §44 lies past the §30 of which the editor speaks. The digitised text also uses square brackets for the editors' marginal summaries, so a bracket alone does not show an addition; the enclosure of the whole paragraph does.

what we say with the mouth."[25] He gives two psalms, *Blessed is the people that understands jubilation* and *Sing wisely*, then the eunuch of Queen Candace, who sought baptism as soon as Philip had made him understand what he was reading, and the parable of the sower: "Everyone who hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart."[26] In his comment on *psallite sapienter* he reduces the point to a definition: "No one does anything wisely that he does not understand."[27]

Cassiodorus names the loss more fully than Augustine: the unknowing singer has the pleasure of melody and lacks compunction, tears and ascent, and Matthew 13 makes the loss a danger. He does not name Augustine; two of his birds are Augustine's, but nothing in the two texts shows a borrowing.

The preface was copied whole. A florilegium on the divine office, printed by Migne as the *Benedictio Dei* and addressed by its compiler to Batheric, bishop of Regensburg, sets the paragraph under the heading "On the praise of the psalms and of the Psalter, from the preface of Cassiodorus on the Psalms".[28] The copy differs from the printed Cassiodorus in punctuation and in the number of one psalm. In his dedication the compiler names his sources (Jerome, Augustine, Cassiodorus, Isidore, Bede) and calls what he has gathered "little flowers". The editor, Petrus Stevartius of Liège, whose address to the reader stands before the text and who says the work was put together "some hundreds of years ago", describes the method: the collector "followed the old custom of some who, when they wrote anything, always chose to speak in the words of the ancients rather than in their own".[29] A compiler who speaks only in others' words reproduces, under its author's name, a warning against singing words one does not understand. Stevartius finds nothing to object to in the method.

Cassiodorus's definition travelled further without his name. A commentary on chapter 19 of the Rule of Benedict, printed in PL 66, gathers sayings on *psallite sapienter* from named authorities. Bernard of Monte Cassino, as quoted there, says that "some sing, but unwisely, because with the heart wandering there is in them only the noise of the lips", and that he too sings unwisely who means by the modulation of his voice only to please his hearers. Nicolaus de Fractura, as quoted there, says: "No one, he says, does wisely what he does not understand."[30] The sentence is Cassiodorus's, given to Nicolaus, and the commentator does not connect them.

25. Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum*, praefatio, PL 70:11A–B. «dulcisonum organum humanis vocibus aemulantur; tubarum sonitus grandiloquis clamoribus reddunt: vocalem citharam viventium chordarum permixtione componunt; et quidquid ante instrumentis musicis videbatur agi, nunc probatur per rationales substantias explicari. Verumtamen nequaquam nobis, ut psittacis merulisque vernandum est, qui dum verba nostra conantur imitari, quid tamen canant, noscuntur modis omnibus ignorare. Melos siquidem blandum animos oblectat, sed non compellit ad lacrymas fructuosas; permulcet aures, sed non ad superna erigit audientes. Corde autem compungimur, si quod ore dicimus, animadvertere valeamus».

26. Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum*, praefatio, PL 70:11C. «qui postquam quod legebat advertit, statim gratiam baptismatis exquisivit» and «In Evangelio etiam Dominus ait: Omnis qui audit verbum regni, et non intelligit, venit malus et rapit quod seminatum est in corde ejus (Matth. XIII, 19) .»

27. Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum*, on Ps. 46:8, PL 70:335A. «Adjecit, psallite sapienter; ut non solum cantantes, sed intelligentes psallere» and «Nemo enim sapienter quidquam facit, quod non intelligit.» The file prints a stray page number, «158», between the two runs.

28. *Benedictio Dei*, PL 129:1401 (heading) and 1404B. «DE LAUDE PSALMORUM ET PSALTERII, Ex praefatione Cassiodori in Psalmos.» and «Verumtamen, nequaquam nobis, ut psittacis merulisque vernandum est, qui, dum verba nostra conantur imitari, quid tamen canant, noscuntur modis omnibus ignorare. Melos siquidem blandum animos oblectat; sed non compellit ad lacrymas fructuosas.» The copy cites the first psalm as «(Psal. LXXXV, 16)», Cassiodorus's text as «(Psal. LXXXVIII, 16)». Migne's file gives the author as «Auctor incertus (Monachus Ratisbonensis?)»; the preface is headed «PRAEFATIO AUCTORIS Ad Bathericum episcopum Ratisbonensem.» and opens «Domino semper in Christo venerando BATHERICO episcopo.» The article gives the name as Batheric, from the file's forms; the bishop's dates are not given in the file.

29. *Benedictio Dei*, PL 129:1399 and 1399A–B. Stevartius, whose address is headed «PETRUS STEVARTIUS LEODIUS LECTORI SALUTEM.»: «Hunc Commentariolum, ante aliquot centenos annos ex verbis veterum Patrum contextum, visum est caeteris adjungere» and «Secutus est autem hujus opusculi collector (quisquis fuit) inveteratum quorumdam morem, qui cum aliquid scriberent, semper antiquorum potius quam suis verbis loqui optabant». The compiler: «ex quibus, qua valui brevitate, quosdam colligens flosculos, vobis obtuli relegendos» and «Hieronymus videlicet, Augustinus, Cassiodorus magnus et eloquens vir: sed et Isidori de Antiphonis Responsoriisque, et aliis rebus: Bedae quoque eximii magistri inserui monita».

30. *Regula S. Benedicti cum commentariis*, c. 19, PL 66:477C–478A. Bernard of Monte Cassino as quoted: «Psallite sapienter, hoc est sapide, id est cum devotionis sapore, ut toto posse cogitetur quod psallendo habetur in ore. Quidam enim psallunt, sed insipienter, quia corde vagante, solus est in eis strepitus labiorum. Ille etiam insipienter psallit, qui modulatione vocis solum audientibus placere intendit.» Nicolaus de Fractura as quoted: «Nemo, inquit, sapienter facit quod non intelligit: ideo cum psallimus, sapienter psallamus, id est cum omni puritate animi, et intellectu eorum quae sursum sunt.» The commentator is not named in the file, and neither Bernard of Monte Cassino nor Nicolaus is on disk in his own text.

The commentary on the Rule is one destination among several. A search of every *Patrologia* file on disk, with the tags stripped, for the sentence in its bare form and in Cassiodorus's *enim … quidquam* form finds it in seven files. Besides Cassiodorus and the commentary on the Rule, the *Benedictio Dei* carries it a second time, in Cassiodorus's comment on Psalm 46; Bruno of Würzburg's commentary on the Psalms has it with Cassiodorus's *enim … quidquam*; Peter Lombard on the Psalms has the bare form; Peter of Poitiers's *Sentences* gives it as something "read" on *psallite sapienter*, with "sings" for "does"; and the *Glossa ordinaria* on the Psalter tags it "(AUG.)".[31] Two of the copies put a name to it: the commentary on the Rule names Nicolaus, and the *Glossa* names Augustine. The same search finds the sentence nowhere in Augustine's *Enarrationes* as held here. The *Glossa*'s tag may cover more than the one sentence, and the file does not show how far it reaches; but as printed, the definition Cassiodorus wrote stands there under Augustine's name.

Latins who sing in Greek

The commentators on 1 Corinthians 14 had a case nearer than the bird: the Christian who prays in a language he does not know. Paul's verse is "If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is without fruit". Ambrosiaster's gloss gives the case a face: "It is plain that our mind is ignorant if the tongue speaks in a language it does not know, as Latin men are accustomed to sing in Greek, delighted by the sound of the words, yet not knowing what they say." He does not stop at the loss. "But the Spirit who is given in baptism knows what the soul prays, while it speaks, or prays aloud in a tongue unknown to it; but the mind, which is the soul, is without fruit. For what fruit can he have who does not know what he says?"[32] The prayer has a knower even when the one who prays does not: the Spirit. Of the *idiota* in verse 16 he says that the unskilled hearer, not understanding, "does not know the end of the prayer and does not answer Amen, that is, true, so that the blessing may be confirmed", for the confirmation of a prayer is completed by those who answer Amen.[33]

The commentary on Paul printed under the name of Haymo of Halberstadt takes over Ambrosiaster's sentence about the Latins who sing in Greek almost word for word, without naming him. It changes what follows. For Haymo "spirit" in Paul's verse means the soul, which gives life to the body and utters the word, and the gloss runs on: "Such a song is without the fruit of understanding, which he cannot have who does not know what he says."[34] The printed Haymo lacks the Spirit who knows what the soul prays. Haymo adds the word *cantilena*, the song as a thing produced, and he moves the *idiota*, whom he defines as one who knows only the language in which he was born, into the Latin liturgy: "If such a one stands by you while you solemnly celebrate the mystery of the Mass, or preach a sermon, or give a blessing, how shall he say Amen over your blessing, when

31. Search of the 5,276 PL files, tags stripped, for *Nemo* (with or without *enim* or *inquit*) *sapienter* (with or without *quidquam*) + verb + *quod non intelligit*: seven files. Cassiodorus (n. 27); *Regula cum commentariis* (n. 30); *Benedictio Dei*, PL 129:1420C: «ut, non solum cantantes, sed intelligentes psallere debeamus. Nemo enim sapienter quidquam facit quod non intelligit.»; Bruno «Herbipolensis», *Expositio Psalmorum*, PL 142:193D: «Psallite sapienter, hoc est quod intelligat quae psallit. Nemo enim sapienter quidquam facit quod non intelligit.»; Peter Lombard, *Commentaria in Psalmos*, PL 191:456C: «Nemo sapienter facit, quod non intelligit.»; Peter of Poitiers, *Sententiae*, PL 211:1074B: «Nemo sapienter psallit quod non intelligit.», introduced as what «legitur» on «Psallite sapienter»; *Glossa ordinaria*, *Liber Psalmorum*, PL 113:913B: «Olim sine sensu psallebant, dum lapides colerent. (AUG.) Nemo sapienter facit quod non intelligit.» Authors are named as in the file headers («Bruno Herbipolensis», «Petrus Pictaviensis», «Anselmus Laudunensis et schola; Glossa ordinaria»); the attributions are not examined here. Augustine's *Enarrationes* (7329.xml) is not among the seven.

32. Ambrosiaster, *Commentaria in Epistolam ad Corinthios Primam*, on 1 Cor 14:14, PL 17:255B. «Manifestum est ignorare animum nostrum, si lingua loquatur, quam nescit, sicut adsolent Latini homines Graece cantare, oblectati sono verborum; nescientes tamen quid dicant. Spiritus autem qui datur in baptismo, scit quid oret animus, dum loquitur, aut perorat lingua sibi ignota: mens autem qui est animus, sine fructu est. Quem enim potest habere fructum, qui ignorat quae loquatur?»

33. Ambrosiaster, on 1 Cor 14:16, PL 17:255C. «Imperitus enim audiens quod non intelligit, nescit finem orationis, et non respondet, amen, id est verum; ut confirmetur benedictio. Per hos enim impletur confirmatio precis, qui respondent, amen; ut omnia dicta veri testimonio in audientium mentibus confirmentur.»

34. Haymo (so printed), *Expositio in epistolas S. Pauli*, on 1 Cor 14:14, PL 117:589A–B. «spiritus meus orat, mens autem mea sine fructu est, id est vis animae meae, id est, ipsa anima quae vivificat corpus profert verbum.» and «Manifestum est, ignorare animum nostrum sive intellectum, si lingua loquatur quod nescit, sicut assolent Latini homines Graece cantare, oblectati sono verborum, nescientes tamen quid dicant. Quae cantilena sine fructu intelligentiae est, quem non habere potest qui ignorat quae loquatur.» Migne's file gives the author as «Haymo Halberstatensis»; the attribution is not examined here.

he does not know what you say?"[35] In the printed Haymo the case is kept and the credit Ambrosiaster gave it is not; the text does not show who removed it, or whether it was ever in the copy Haymo's commentary was made from.

Three later commentaries carry the same simile, and none of them has the Spirit who knows. A search of the *Patrologia* on disk, with the tags stripped, finds "Graece cantare" in five files: Ambrosiaster, the printed Haymo, Hervé of Bourg-Dieu, Peter Lombard's *Collectanea* and the *Glossa ordinaria* on 1 Corinthians. The last three read *solent*, where Ambrosiaster has *adsolent* and the printed Haymo *assolent*.[36] Hervé keeps Ambrosiaster's "a tongue it does not know" (*quam nescit*) where the printed Haymo has "what it does not know" (*quod nescit*), and none of the three has the sentence on the *cantilena* that is the printed Haymo's own. On this evidence the printed Haymo is not shown to be their source, and the passages do not show what was. What the three add is a gloss on *spiritus*. Hervé, pointing back to an earlier note of his own, calls it "a certain power of the soul below the mind, where the likenesses of bodily things are expressed"; "tongue" can mean any utterance of signs before they are understood; and Paul's resolve to pray with the spirit and with the mind means "that the signs of things be formed for me in the spirit, and their understanding shine out in the mind".[37] The *Glossa* gives the same gloss on *spiritus*, with "impressed" for "expressed", and the same reading of Paul's resolve. It shares with Lombard a sentence that the printed Haymo lacks: "So it is if someone speaks in an unknown tongue, or utters the signs of some things without understanding, as Latin men are accustomed to sing in Greek".[38] Lombard sets out three readings of "my spirit prays", one after another: the Holy Spirit given me by God, who "makes me speak"; reason, which makes me speak what it thinks good; and the lower power of the soul where the likenesses of bodily things are impressed, as Pharaoh's spirit saw the images and Joseph's mind understood them.[39] The Holy Spirit is still present in Lombard, as the one who moves the speaker to speak. The Spirit who knows what the soul prays while the soul does not is in Ambrosiaster and in none of the four later texts that carry his simile. The loss is a feature of the line as it survives on this shelf, not an act that can be laid to any one of its members.

Primasius moved the verse from ignorance of a language to distraction: "spirit" here is speech, "which

35. Haymo (so printed), on 1 Cor 14:16, PL 117:589C. «Idios dicitur proprius: unde dicitur idiota, propriam linguam tantummodo sciens, in qua natus et nutritus est. Si igitur talis astiterit tibi, dum aut mysterium missae solemniter celebras, aut sermonem facis, aut etiam benedictionem tribuis: quomodo dicet: Amen, super tuam benedictionem? cum nescit quid dicas».

36. The five files: 6984.xml (Ambrosiaster), 9079.xml (Haymo, so printed), 11182.xml (Hervé), 11454.xml (Lombard, *Collectanea*), 8981.xml (*Glossa ordinaria*, *Epistola I ad Corinthios*). A plain `grep` for the phrase misses 8981, where a line break falls inside the words in the XML. Ambrosiaster: «sicut adsolent Latini homines Graece cantare» (n. 32); Haymo: «sicut assolent Latini homines Graece cantare» (n. 34).

37. Hervé of Bourg-Dieu («Herveus Burgidolensis» in the file), *Commentaria in epistolas Pauli*, on 1 Cor 14:14–15, PL 181:963A–C. «Ignorat enim animus si lingua loquatur quam nescit, sicut solent Latini homines Graece cantare, oblectati sono verborum, nescientes tamen quid dicant. Ut supradictum est spiritus vocatur vis animae quaedam mente inferior, ubi corporalium rerum similitudines exprimuntur. Mens autem est illa superior pars animae, ubi intellectus et ratio proprie sedem habent. Lingua quoque sicut et superius dictum est, designare potest quamlibet signorum prolationem priusquam intelligantur.» and «Quia orabo spiritu, orabo et mente, id est loquar spiritu et mente, ut signa rerum mihi formentur in spiritu, et eorum refulgeat intellectus in mente». The earlier note is at PL 181:961A: «qui modo quodam proprio vocatur spiritus, vis animae quaedam mente inferior, ubi corporalium rerum similitudines exprimuntur.» Hervé's first gloss on the verse takes *spiritus* as breath: «spiritus meus, id est flatus oris mei orat dum loquor in oratione».

38. *Glossa ordinaria* on 1 Cor 14:14–15, PL 114:544B–C. «Spiritus vocatur vis animae inferior mente, ubi corporalium rerum similitudines imprimuntur.» and «Ita est si lingua incognita quis loquatur, vel signa aliquarum rerum sine intellectu proferat, sicut solent Latini homines Graece cantare, oblectari sono verborum, nescientes tamen quid dicant. VERS. 15.– Orabo spiritu. Id est, ita loqui approbo, ut signa rerum formentur in spiritu, et eorum intellectus refulgeat in mente.» The file reads «oblectari» where the others have *oblectati*. Migne's file gives the author as «Anselmus Laudunensis et schola; Glossa ordinaria».

39. Peter Lombard, *Collectanea in epistolas Pauli*, on 1 Cor 14:14–15, PL 191:1667A–C. «spiritus meus, scilicet Spiritus sanctus a Deo mihi datus, orat, id est facit me loqui. Vel, spiritus, id est ratio, orat, id est facit me loqui, id quod bonum esse putat. Vel spiritus hic vocatur, vis animae inferior mente, ubi corporalium rerum similitudines imprimuntur, ut verbi gratia spiritus Pharaonis informatus est ut videret imagines; mens vero Joseph illuminata est ut intelligeret.» and «Ita enim fit, si lingua incognita quis loquatur, vel signa aliquarum rerum sine intellectu proferat, sicut solent Latini homines Graece cantare, oblectati sono verborum, nescientes tamen quid dicant.» and «ita loqui approbabo ut et signa rerum formentur in spiritu, et eorum intellectus refulgeat in mente». Between the first and second runs the file prints the source tag «[Ambrosius]»; where the excerpt it marks begins and ends is not shown.

sometimes prays while the mind is thinking of something else", and cited *My heart has forsaken me*.[40] That case, of the man who knows the words and is not attending to them, is the one Aquinas will answer.

Understanding without words

The tradition also credits a voice without words, and it is the opposite of the parrot's. Expounding *sing well to him in jubilation*, Augustine says: "What is it to sing in jubilation? To understand, and to be unable to explain in words what is sung in the heart." Reapers and vintagers who begin in the words of their songs and are filled with a joy the words cannot hold "turn away from the syllables of the words and go into the sound of jubilation". "Jubilation is a sound signifying that the heart is in labour with what it cannot say", and it befits the ineffable God, whom one cannot speak and ought not to be silent about.[41] Here the sound signifies, and what it signifies is an understanding larger than the words. The parrot has words and no understanding; the jubilant singer has understanding and leaves the words behind.

John of Salisbury's attack on the church music of his day uses both figures. The attack is on singers who, "before the face of the Lord, in the very sanctuary", with "the luxury of a wanton voice" and womanish modes, try to soften the souls of their hearers. Their soft modulations would make you think you heard the Sirens, "and you will marvel at the facility of voices to which the nightingale or the parrot, or anything more sonorous, cannot match its measures"; the ear's judgment is overcome, and such music, past measure, rouses lust sooner than devotion. That the birds cannot match these singers is mockery, not praise of the singers: the fault is too much art. John's rule of measure follows: "If your mouth sings the praise of the Lord from the abundance of the heart, if you sing with the spirit and the mind, then you sing wisely, even short of understanding the articulate voice, you hold the straightest rule of modesty, and you charm the ears of the Most High not so much with the jubilation of the voice as of the mind."[42] The condition, "with the spirit and the mind", is Paul's phrase for singing with understanding, and the sentence ends in jubilation. The plainer reading is therefore that John means a singer who does understand and whose praise passes beyond articulate words, as in Augustine's jubilation; that he grants wisdom to a singer who does not grasp the words is a possible reading, not the evident one, and the article leaves both open. Either way the concession is made for a singer whose heart is full and whose mind is singing.

In the eighth book the birds return, and this time they win. Under the heading "That some desire to be conformed to brutes and insensible things", John calls it a manifest abjection of human dignity to strive to equal "the peacock, the nightingale or the parrot", or any brute or insensible thing. Of men who give themselves to the pleasures of the senses he says: "Let them sing together, and fill out the melody of all music as best they can; none of them will equal the nightingale, or the parrot. Is it not then unseemly and shameful for human

40. Primasius, *Commentaria in epistolas S. Pauli*, on 1 Cor 14:14, PL 68:541C. «Hoc loco spiritus sermo intelligendus est, qui nonnunquam mente alia cogitante precatur. Unde propheta: Cor meum dereliquit me. Mens autem mea sine fructu est. Quia non intelligo quod dicam per spiritum.»

41. Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps.* 32, II, sermo 1, 8, PL 36:283. «Quid est in jubilatione canere? Intelligere, verbis explicare non posse quod canitur corde.» and «avertunt se a syllabis verborum, et eunt in sonum jubilationis. Jubilum sonus quidam est significans cor parturire quod dicere non potest. Et quem decet ista jubilatio, nisi ineffabilem Deum? Ineffabilis enim est, quem fari non potes: et si eum fari non potes, et tacere non debes, quid restat nisi ut jubiles; ut gaudeat cor sine verbis, et immensa latitudo gaudiorum metas non habeat syllabarum?»

42. John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* I.6, PL 199:402C–403A. «Ipsum quoque cultum religionis incestat, quod ante conspectum Domini, in ipsis penetralibus sanctuarii, lascivientis vocis luxu, quadam ostentatione sui, muliebribus modis notularum articulorumque caesuris, stupentes animulas emollire nituntur.» and «Cum praecinentium, et succinentium, canentium et decinentium, intercinentium et occinentium, praemolles modulationes audieris, sirenarum concentus credas esse, non hominum et de vocum facilitate miraberis, quibus philomena vel psittacus, aut si quid sonorius est, modos suos nequeunt coaequare.» and «Si ergo ex abundantia cordis os tuum laudem Domini moduletur, si spiritu psallis et mente, psallis denique sapienter, etiam citra articulatae vocis intelligentiam, rectissimam modestiae regulam tenes, et non tam vocis quam mentis jubilo aures mulces Altissimi». The phrase *citra articulatae vocis intelligentiam* could also refer to the melismas of chant, in which the syllables are drawn out past recognition (a sense supplied from general knowledge, not from these files); the article reads it in its plainer sense.

loftiness if, setting aside its own gift, in which it excels, it aspires to others' gifts, in which it is surpassed?"[43] Here no singer equals the birds, and to try is a degradation; in the sixth chapter of the first book the singers outdo the birds and are mocked for it. The two passages do not agree on who excels in song. They agree on the measure: man's own gift, and not the bird's. The eighth book's ground is close to the one the sermon on Psalm 18 gave, that to sing knowingly is granted to the nature of man; John does not cite Augustine, and the likeness is the article's observation.

4. The Adjudication: Thomas Aquinas

Aquinas does not mention the parrot, but he answers human cases the parrot had stood for. The article of the *Summa theologiae* that asks whether attention is necessary to prayer opens with three objections, of which the third is the sharpest: inattentive prayer is not without sin, for one who prays with a wandering mind "seems to mock God, as if he spoke to a man and did not attend to what he himself was saying", and Basil says that such a one will not only fail to obtain what he asks but will rather provoke God.[44] The *sed contra* is that holy men too suffer a wandering mind in prayer, as the psalm says, *my heart has forsaken me*, the verse Primasius had used.

The body of the article takes the question as one "chiefly about vocal prayer", and distinguishes two senses of "necessary". In the first, that by which the end is better reached, attention is necessary to prayer without qualification. In the second, that without which a thing cannot reach its effect, the answer depends on which effect is meant, for prayer has three. The first is common to every act informed by charity, to merit, "and for this effect it is not of necessity required that attention be present to the prayer throughout; but the force of the first intention with which one comes to pray makes the whole prayer meritorious, as happens in other meritorious acts". The second is proper to prayer, to obtain, and for this too the first intention suffices, "which God chiefly attends to". Then the limit: "But if the first intention is lacking, the prayer is neither meritorious nor impetrative; for God does not hear the prayer to which he who prays does not attend, as Gregory says." The third effect is the one prayer works at once, "a certain spiritual refreshment of the mind, and for this attention is of necessity required in prayer. Hence it is said in 1 Corinthians 14, *if I pray with the tongue, my mind is without fruit*."[45]

He then distinguishes three attentions that can be brought to vocal prayer: "one by which one attends to the words, lest one err in them; a second by which one attends to the sense of the words; a third by which one attends to the end of the prayer, that is, to God and to the thing for which one prays, which is the most

43. John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* VIII.12, heading and PL 199:756B; 761B. «Quod brutis et insensibilibus quidam appetunt conformari» and «cum manifesta sit humanae dignitatis abjectio, si non hirco aut sui, sed leoni et pardo, sed pantherae aut satyro, sed pavoni, philomenae, aut psittaco, sed cuicunque brutorum aut insensibilium studeat coaequari.» and «Concinant hi, et totius musicae melos pro viribus expleant, nemo eorum philomenam aequabit, aut psittacum. Nonne ergo indecens et probrosum est humanae celsitudini, si postposita dote sua, in qua praevalet, ad alienas, in quibus superatur, aspirat?» The chapter stands in the eighth book of the file («LIBER OCTAVUS»), not the first.

44. Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II-II q.83 a.13 arg.3 (objection; not Aquinas's view). «Sed non est absque peccato quod aliquis orando evagationem mentis patiatur, videtur eum deridere Deum, sicut et si alicui homini loqueretur et non attenderet ad ea quae ipse proferret. Unde Basilius dicit, est divinum auxilium implorandum non remisse, nec mente huc illuc evagante, eo quod talis non solum non impetrabit quod petit, sed et magis Deum irritabit .» *Sed contra*: «Sed contra est quod etiam sancti viri quandoque orantes evagationem mentis patiuntur, secundum illud Psalm., cor meum dereliquit me .»

45. Aquinas, *ST* II-II q.83 a.13 co. «Respondeo dicendum quod quaestio haec praecipue locum habet in oratione vocali.» and «Primus quidem communis omnibus actibus caritate informatis, quod est mereri. Et ad hunc effectum non ex necessitate requiritur quod attentio adsit orationi per totum, sed vis primae intentionis qua aliquis ad orandum accedit, reddit totam orationem meritoriam, sicut in aliis meritoriis actibus accidit. Secundus autem effectus orationis est ei proprius, quod est impetrare. Et ad hunc etiam effectum sufficit prima intentio, quam Deus principaliter attendit. Si autem prima intentio desit, oratio nec meritoria est nec impetrativa, illam enim orationem Deus non audit cui ille qui orat non intendit , ut Gregorius dicit. Tertius autem effectus orationis est quem praesentialiter efficit, scilicet quaedam spiritualis refectio mentis. Et ad hoc de necessitate requiritur in oratione attentio. Unde dicitur I Cor. XIV, si orem lingua, mens mea sine fructu est .» The attribution to Gregory is Aquinas's and was not traced.

necessary. And this even the unlettered can have."[46] The replies keep the line between weakness and choice. He prays in spirit and in truth who comes to pray at the prompting of the Spirit, even if his mind afterwards wanders through infirmity. A deliberate wandering is a sin and hinders the fruit of prayer, but "a wandering of the mind that happens beyond one's purpose does not take away the fruit of prayer".[47]

The lecture on 1 Corinthians 14 applies the same scheme to Paul's case and says more. It is the less secure witness of the two: the file gives it as a *reportatio*, a hearer's record of the lecture, and where the article reports it as Aquinas's words, that qualification stands. In private prayer, Aquinas reads, "if there is some unlettered man who makes his prayer by saying a psalm or the Our Father, and does not understand what he says, he prays with the tongue; and it does not matter whether he prays with words granted to him by the Holy Spirit or with the words of others".[48] The sentence classifies; it does not acquit. Whether the words are the Spirit's or another's, the man who does not understand them "prays with the tongue", which is the lesser case, and the next sentence ranks him: "it is plain that he gains more who prays and understands". The one who understands is refreshed in both intellect and affection; the mind of the one who does not "is without the fruit of refreshment". Yet the comparison that follows gives him something. "Since it is better to be refreshed as to affection and intellect than as to affection alone", prophecy is worth more in prayer than the gift of tongues alone: the one who prays with the tongue only is, on this reckoning, refreshed as to affection alone. For "my spirit prays" he gives three readings: the Holy Spirit given to me, who inclines and moves me to pray, "and nonetheless I merit in that prayer, because the very fact that I am moved by the Holy Spirit is merit to me"; my reason, which dictates to me that I say what is for the good, "whether in my own words or those of other saints"; or "the imaginative power, inasmuch as the voices or likenesses of bodily things are only in the imagination, without being understood by the intellect".[49] Aquinas lists the three and does not choose among them. The third describes words held without understanding as sounds and images present to a power below the intellect and not taken up by it, which is what Paul calls a mind without fruit. Its terms are older than Aquinas. Hervé, the *Glossa* and Lombard had glossed Paul's *spiritus* as the power of the soul below the mind where the likenesses of bodily things are formed, and Lombard gives all three of Aquinas's readings in the same order, the second in nearly the same terms (section 3). The power below the intellect is also the region *De musica* had shared with the beasts (section 2): memory, which swallows and goats have, and not the intellect, in which alone knowledge is. That link is the article's; Aquinas does not draw it.

The question follows: is one who prays without understanding without the fruit of prayer? "There is a twofold fruit of prayer. One fruit is the merit that comes to the man; the other is the spiritual consolation and devotion conceived from prayer. As to the fruit of devotion, one who does not attend to what he prays, or does

46. Aquinas, *ST* II–II q.83 a.13 co. «Sciendum tamen quod est triplex attentio quae orationi vocali potest adhiberi. Una quidem qua attenditur ad verba, ne quis in eis erret. Secunda qua attenditur ad sensum verborum. Tertia qua attenditur ad finem orationis, scilicet ad Deum et ad rem pro qua oratur, quae quidem est maxime necessaria. Et hanc etiam possunt habere idiotae.»

47. Aquinas, *ST* II–II q.83 a.13 ad 1 and ad 3. «Ad primum ergo dicendum quod in spiritu et veritate orat qui ex instinctu spiritus ad orandum accedit, etiam si ex aliqua infirmitate mens postmodum evagetur.» and «Ad tertium dicendum quod si quis ex proposito in oratione mente evagetur, hoc peccatum est, et impedit orationis fructum.» and «Evagatio vero mentis quae fit praeter propositum, orationis fructum non tollit.»

48. Aquinas, *Super I Epistolam ad Corinthios* c.14 l.3, in the Corpus Thomisticum text headed «[reportatio vulgata]». «Et primo in oratione privata, dicens, quod si sit aliquis idiota, qui faciat orationem suam, dicens Psalmum, vel pater noster, et non intelligat ea quae dicit, iste orat lingua, et non refert utrum oret verbis sibi a spiritu sancto concessis, sive verbis aliorum; et si sit alius qui orat, et intelligit quae dicit, hic quidem orat et prophetat. Constat quod plus lucratur qui orat et intelligit, quam qui tantum lingua orat, qui scilicet non intelligit quae dicit.»

49. Aquinas, *Super I Cor*. c.14 l.3. «Nam ille qui intelligit, reficitur et quantum ad intellectum et quantum ad affectum; sed mens eius, qui non intelligit, est sine fructu refectionis. Unde et cum melius sit refici quantum ad affectum et intellectum, quam quantum ad affectum solum, constat quod in oratione plus valet prophetiae donum quam solum donum linguarum.» and «tunc spiritus meus , id est spiritus sanctus mihi datus, orat , qui inclinat et movet me ad orandum. Et nihilominus mereor in ipsa oratione, quia hoc ipsum, quod moveor a spiritu sancto, est mihi meritum.» and «Vel spiritus meus , id est ratio mea, orat , id est dictat mihi quod ego loquar ea quae ad bonum sunt, sive verbis propriis sive aliorum sanctorum. Vel spiritus meus , id est virtus imaginativa, orat , inquantum voces seu similitudines corporalium sunt tantum in imaginatione absque hoc quod intelligantur ab intellectu; et ideo subdit: mens autem mea , id est intellectus meus, sine fructu est , quia non intelligit.»

not understand it, is deprived; but as to the fruit of merit it must not be said that he is deprived, for then many prayers would be without merit, since a man can hardly say a single Our Father without his mind being carried to other things." The reason is the one given in the *Summa*: in acts ordered to a right end, the first force that moves the intention remains through the whole work unless it is broken by a contrary affection.[50] The lecture ranks the three attentions differently from the *Summa*. Attention to the words "sometimes harms, inasmuch as it hinders devotion"; attention to the sense "harms, though it is not very harmful"; attention to the end "is better, and as it were necessary".[51]

The *Summa* gives the hearer of chant a credit the lecture does not. The second article of the question on praise asks whether song is to be used in the praise of God, and its fifth objection is that song hinders the praise of the mind, since "what is sung can be understood less by others than if it were uttered without song". Aquinas answers that one who sings for devotion attends the more to what is said, "and the same reason holds for hearers, in whom, though sometimes they do not understand what is sung, they understand nevertheless why it is sung, namely for the praise of God; and this suffices to excite devotion".[52] Set beside the lecture, where one who does not understand what he prays "is deprived" of the fruit of devotion, this divides devotion in two: the devotion that rests on the sense of the words is lost to one who does not understand them, and the devotion that rests on their purpose is not. The credit goes, as elsewhere in these texts, through what the hearer does understand, here the end the singing serves. The two passages are the article's to set side by side; Aquinas does not compare them.

In public prayer the priest, Aquinas grants, sometimes says things he does not understand. The *idiota*, "properly one who knows only the language in which he was born", is to say Amen, which means "let it be" or "it is true"; but if he does not understand, how will he conform himself to what is said? "He can indeed conform himself, even if he does not understand, but in general only, not in particular, because he cannot understand what good you are saying, except only that you are blessing." Why then are blessings not given in the vulgar tongue, so that the people may understand them and conform themselves more? "It is to be said that this perhaps was so in the primitive Church; but after the faithful were instructed and know what they hear in the common office, blessings are made in Latin." The hearer who does not understand is not edified in particular, "though in general he understands and is edified".[53]

Aquinas answers two cases, and the article keeps them apart. The *Summa* answers the case of the wandering mind, which is a failure of attention: the first intention with which one came to pray carries merit and impetration through a prayer not attended to. The lecture extends merit, and only merit, to one who does not

50. Aquinas, *Super I Cor*. c.14 l.3. «Sed numquid quandocumque quis orat, et non intelligit quae dicit, sit sine fructu orationis? Dicendum quod duplex est fructus orationis. Unus fructus est meritum quod homini provenit; alius fructus est spiritualis consolatio et devotio concepta ex oratione. Et quantum ad fructum devotionis spiritualis privatur qui non attendit ad ea quae orat, seu non intelligit; sed quantum ad fructum meriti, non est dicendum quod privetur: quia sic multae orationes essent sine merito, cum vix unum pater noster potest homo dicere, quin mens ad alia feratur.» and «sed vis prima, quae movet intentionem, manet in toto opere, etiam si aliquando in aliquo particulari divertat; et hic prima vis facit totum opus meritorium, nisi interrumpatur per contrariam affectionem, quae divertat a fine praedicto ad finem contrarium.»

51. Aquinas, *Super I Cor*. c.14 l.3. «Sed sciendum est quod triplex est attentio. Una est ad verba quae homo dicit: et haec aliquando nocet, inquantum impedit devotionem; alia est ad sensum verborum, et haec nocet, non tamen est multum nociva; tertia est ad finem, et haec est melior et quasi necessaria. Tamen id quod dicit apostolus mens est sine fructu , intelligitur de fructu refectionis.»

52. Aquinas, *ST* II-II q.91 a.2 arg.5 (objection) and ad 5. «tum etiam quia ea quae cantantur minus ab aliis intelligi possunt quam si sine cantu proferrentur. Ergo cantus non sunt divinis laudibus adhibendi.» The reply: «Ad quintum dicendum quod per cantum quo quis studiose ad delectandum utitur, abstrahitur animus a consideratione eorum quae cantantur. Sed si aliquis cantet propter devotionem, attentius considerat quae dicuntur» and «Et eadem est ratio de audientibus, in quibus, etsi aliquando non intelligant quae cantantur, intelligunt tamen propter quid cantantur, scilicet ad laudem Dei; et hoc sufficit ad devotionem excitandam.» The question of the article, from the prologue to q.91: «Secundo, utrum in laudibus Dei sint cantus adhibendi.»

53. Aquinas, *Super I Cor*. c.14 l.3. «quae est quando sacerdos publice orat, ubi aliquando dicit quaedam quae non intelligit, aliquando aliqua quae intelligit.» and «Idiota proprie dicitur qui scit tantum linguam in qua natus est» and «Potest quidem se conformare, etiam si non intelligat, sed in generali tantum, non in speciali, quia non potest intelligere quid boni dicas, nisi quod benedicas tantum. Sed quare non dantur benedictiones in vulgari, ut intelligantur a populo, et conforment se magis eis? Dicendum est quod hoc forte fuit in Ecclesia primitiva, sed postquam fideles instructi sunt et sciunt quae audiunt in communi officio, fiunt benedictiones in Latino.» and «sed alter , qui audit et non intelligit, non aedificatur , inquantum non intelligit in speciali, etsi in generali intelligat et aedificetur.»

understand his words: the motion of the Spirit is merit to him, and the first force of the intention remains through the whole work. No text quoted here gives impetration to words not understood. The lecture's "it does not matter" whether the words are the Spirit's or another's places the unlettered man in the lesser case; it does not acquit him. What the words cannot do is supply the act. Every credit is routed through a person who prays: the first intention with which he came, the Spirit who moves him, the will by which he conforms himself in general. Without the first intention the prayer is "neither meritorious nor impetrative". The *idiota*'s Amen is possible because he understands in general that a blessing is being given and is edified in general; the credit runs through that general understanding and his will, and he is not, as the parrot is, a producer of words without understanding. Hearers of chant who do not follow the words understand why they are sung, and that suffices for devotion. What is lost to one who does not understand is the refreshment of the intellect and the devotion that rests on the sense. Refreshment as to affection alone, and the devotion that rests on the purpose, remain; and the third attention, to God and to the thing prayed for, which the *Summa* calls the most necessary, is open to the unlettered.

5. The Credited Parrot

Leo IX and the Danish parrot

In Wibert's Life of Pope Leo IX a parrot's words are given weight, and the Life says why. As the pope's fame spread, Wibert says, his name resounded everywhere, "nor is it to be wondered that a rational creature should resound in his praise, when even irrational animals, wonderful to say, formed a human voice in proclaiming his name". At Benevento, "as is reported by truthful relaters", a cock repeated his name, and when about to give its natural cry sounded "Papa Leo".[54] Wibert then tells of a dog in Apulia which in barking used to cry out in human words "Deus meus", and gives a reason for crediting a beast's words: "It is not incredible that a brute animal in that region should in some way have called on the mercy of God, since it is certain that the Christian religion had almost wholly perished there and the inhabitants of that land were subject to a foreign power, so that they might be roused to call on help from above at least by the voice of an irrational beast."[55] The dog does not pray. Its cry is addressed through it to the men who hear it.

Among the many who sought the pope, the king of Denmark sent him a parrot as a gift, "in which a certain divine grace appeared, with wonderful power. For although some birds learn to form human words with hunger as their teacher, this one, as is told, with no one compelling, the whole way while it was being carried to the lord pope, sang back *Ad papam vado*; and as soon as it was presented to him, with no one teaching, it cried out in a sweet voice *Papa Leo*." When the pope, wearied by business, withdrew to his private room, or some sadness weighed on his mind, the bird was often there to relieve him, "and neatly and crisply resounding *Papa Leo*, it roused the strength of his mind".[56] Wibert expects a reader to object, and answers: let no one

54. Wibert, *Vita S. Leonis IX* II.3, PL 143:490B–C. «Nec mirandum rationabilem creaturam in ejus resonare laudem, cum etiam irrationabilia animalia, mirum dictu! illius praedicando nomen humanam formarent vocem. Nam, sicut a veridicis fertur relatoribus, apud Beneventum gallus frequenti voce ejus nomen repetebat, et naturalem emissurus vocem, cunctis mirantibus, papa Leo insonabat.»

55. Wibert, *Vita S. Leonis IX* II.4, PL 143:490C. «Dicitur etiam illis temporibus in finibus Apuliae canis exstitisse, qui latrando solitus erat humanis verbis Deus meus inclamare. Non autem est incredibile brutum animal in ea regione Dei misericordiam quocunque modo invocasse, dum certum est Christi religionem ibidem pene omnino deperisse, accolasque illius patriae alienae potestati subditos esse, ut ad invocationem superni auxilii saltem irrationabilis pecudis excitarentur voce.»

56. Wibert, *Vita S. Leonis IX* II.4, PL 143:491A–B. «Inter multos ergo, qui ejus ambiebant praesentiam invisere, rex Danamarchiae transmisit illi avem psittacum in munere, in quo quaedam divina apparuit gratia, admirabili virtute. Quamvis enim quaedam aves humana formare verba discant magistra fame, haec tamen, ut fertur, nullo cogente, toto itinere dum ad domnum papam deferretur, Ad papam vado, recinebat; et mox, ut ei est praesentata, nemine docente, voce dulcisona, papa Leo inclamabat.» and «haec avis aegritudinis illius levamen frequenter aderat, et concinne ac recise, papa Leo, resonans, robur mentis illi excitabat.»

think it blameworthy that this just man took comfort in the bird's modulation, since Augustine, grieving for his mother, used music to relieve his sorrow, and Antony allowed some recreation to monastic rigour.[57]

What earns the credit is stated in the text. The grace lies in what the bird's words are not. The natural historians knew two sources for a parrot's words, nature, which gives it the greeting, and instruction, which gives it everything else; Wibert names the second, "hunger as teacher", and denies it, "no one compelling", "no one teaching". The parrot is credited because its words are not parrot's words in the ordinary sense. Their content is the pope's name and the place it was going. Their use is comfort, and Wibert defends that use by putting the bird's voice with music, not with speech: it is its *modulatio* that relieves the pope, and the precedent is Augustine's recourse to melody. The words are not said to be understood. They are apt, though: the bird says "I am going to the pope" while it is being carried to him, and names him as soon as it is presented, and part of the wonder lies in that fit between the words and the occasion. The grace that appeared in the bird is God's. The pope is the object of the words, not the one credited with them; and the credit is given to words that, as Wibert reports it, no one taught.

The story comes, on Wibert's own account, from report. The Bollandists reprinted it in the *Acta Sanctorum* for 19 April, with small variants and a marginal summary, "he is refreshed by a parrot saying Papa Leo".[58] Their note sets beside it the Chronicle of Senones, composed a century and a half after Leo's death, in which the cocks of every village the future pope entered cried in the language of the country "Leo Papa, Leo Papa", although no one yet knew the name he would take; the editor calls this "a less credible amplification", and judges that a thing that happened once, and in Leo's absence, has been "adorned by popular rumour".[59] The prophesying cocks are discounted; the parrot is left without comment.

The bird that says what may not be said

Godfrey of Viterbo's *Pantheon* tells in verse of the emperor Zeno and his son Leo, falsely accused of plotting his father's death. Zeno orders him killed; the mother saves him by substituting another youth, hides him as a monk, and Zeno's edict stands that "whoever is called Leo shall die". For fifteen years the son is hidden. "The mother rears a bird that speaks in the human way, which learned to lament the youth with the grieving mother: *Alas, Leo, my son, our glory lies low.*" At the Easter feast, with Zeno seated, the parrot laments in the midst of the court, "*Alas, Leo*, said the bird, *why do you perish, son Leo?*", and as it names Leo in clear speech it moves the lords to pity.[60] Zeno asks why the court weeps. The mother answers that she herself fears to say, "if you would rather know, the bird is telling you now". Zeno turns to her: "show me the reason, which youth does

57. Wibert, *Vita S. Leonis IX* II.4, PL 143:491B. «Nec videatur cuiquam reprehensibile hunc justum in sui consolatione hujus avis usum modulatione, cum legamus beatum Augustinum pro exitu suae matris inconsolabiliter lamentantem, musicam melodiam ad levamen moeroris sibi adhibuisse, sanctumque Antonium rigori monastico aliquantulum oblectamenti certo tempore concessisse.» Wibert's appeal to Augustine was not traced.

58. *Acta Sanctorum*, Apr. II (19 April), *Vita S. Leonis IX*, c. II §§9–10. The volume is taken from the file's header («April II»); the file gives no page numbers. «& naturalem emissurus sonum, cunctis mirantibus;», «[recreatur a psittaco dicente Papa Leo,]», «ad Domnum Præsulem deferretur, ad Papam vado,» and «hunc justum in sui consolatione hujus avis usum modulamine». Migne reads «vocem», «domnum papam» and «modulatione».

59. *Acta Sanctorum*, Apr. II (19 April), annotation e to c. II. «Chronicon Senoniense, quod extat tomo 3 spicilegii Acheriani, compositum sesqui seculo post mortem S. Leonis, lib, 2 cap. 14 per auxesim minus verosimilem ita id extollit.» and «galli earumdem villarum, lingua ejus patriæ per quam transibat, densis clamoribus eum Papam futurum clamabant; Leo Papa, Leo Papa; (cum sibi nomen imponendum omnes ignorarent)» and «Quo audito, qui cum eo erant, eum in summa veneratione habere cœperunt, quæ ex casu semel facto & quidem ipso absente, sic adornata videntur rumore populari.» The letters marking the notes in the digitised text do not stand where the notes' contents would put them, so the note's point of attachment in the printed page is not certain.

60. Godfrey of Viterbo, *Pantheon*, «Item de Zenone imperatore, versifice narratur», PL 198:902C–903A. «Praecipitur: quicunque Leo dictus moriatur, Permanet edictum cum feritate ratum.» and «Nutrit avem mater, humano more loquentem, Plangere quae didicit juvenem, cum matre dolente: Heu! Leo, mi nate, gloria nostra jacet. Victima paschalis Zenone sedente paratur, Psittacus in medio plangit, luctus renovatur: Heu, Leo, dixit avis, cur Leo nate peris? Claro sermone dum nominat ipse Leonem, Corda ducum pietate movet, renovatque dolorem». The Leo of the poem is the son of the emperor Zeno, not Leo IX.

your bird lament, or which Leo? For this parrot moves my very bowels."[61] She tells him that his son lives, and the father relents.

In the verse the bird does the acts. It laments; "as it names Leo in clear speech" it moves the lords to pity; the mother says that "the bird is telling you now"; and Zeno says "this parrot moves my very bowels". The lament was taught: the bird "learned to lament the youth with the grieving mother". Zeno's "your bird" marks possession. One reading makes the mother the speaker and the bird the means by which what she fears to say is said; the text supports that reading in her fear and in her teaching, and works against it in giving every act of speech, lament and narration to the bird. On the other reading the poem credits the bird itself with what it says, and this is the one story read here in which it does so. Either way the words are credited with an effect: they move the court and the emperor. Godfrey names no source at this place.

Salutations, a witness and an emperor's joke

The greeting the natural historians gave the parrot by nature becomes evidence in Druthmar's commentary on Matthew. Expounding *Peace to this house*, he says that Christians ought to greet each other by the Lord's command and by the Romans', for it was the custom of the ancients; the bad custom among courtiers of not greeting one's fellow should be shamed by the kings of Israel and by the Romans, among whom emperors were greeted "not only by men among themselves, but through birds also. Hence that saying of the parrot: *From you I shall learn the names of others; this I learned by myself: Chaire, Caesar.*"[62] The bird's line is a witness to a custom. Its words are credited with attestation, and nothing more is asked of them. Druthmar gives the couplet without its author and with the Greek greeting where Isidore has the Latin.

A chronicle of the abbey of St Hubert in the Ardennes preserves the anecdote of the emperor's birds in another setting. Two envoys of the abbey, sent to the abbot of Prüm about a tithe, won his favour by their talk, the younger slipping in "briefly culled events of the ancient annals".[63] The printed text tags the stories with references to Macrobius's *Saturnalia*, in parentheses that appear to be the editor's; the chronicler does not name him, and the *Saturnalia* is not on disk. Among them: Augustus, returning from Actium, met a man with a raven taught to say "Hail, Caesar, victorious commander", and bought it for twenty thousand *nummi*; the trainer's partner revealed a second raven, which said "Hail, victorious commander Antony", and Caesar, not at all angered, merely ordered the reward shared. "Saluted likewise by a parrot, he ordered it bought." A poor cobbler, exhausted by the cost of training a raven, used to say to the silent bird "Labour and expense are lost"; when at last it gave the greeting, Augustus said he had enough such greeters at home, and the raven, remembering, added its master's complaint, "Labour and expense are lost". Caesar laughed and bought the bird for more than he had paid for any.[64]

61. Godfrey, *Pantheon*, PL 198:903A. «Mater ait: Cognosce magis, te Zeno timeri, Cur plorat, cur turba dolet, timet ipsa fateri, Noscere si mavis, jam tibi narrat avis. Zeno refert, tu (quaeso) mihi monstra rationem, Quem juvenem deplorat avis tua, quemve Leonem; Viscera namque mea psittacus iste movet.»

62. Druthmar, *Expositio in Matthaeum* c. 26, on Mt 10:12, PL 106:1347D. «Sed ex mala consuetudine et doctrina adolevit apud palatinos ut nullus comparem suum obviantem imprecetur. Legant librum Regum, ibi invenient Hebraeos reges ita fecisse. Et Romani similiter, ita ut non solum homines inter se, sed per aves etiam imperatores salutatos. Unde est illud psittaci: A vobis aliorum nomina discam, Hoc didici per me: Chaire Cesar.»

63. *Chronicon S. Huberti Andaginensis*, PL 154:1398B–C. «Excepti honorabiliter a venerabili abbate Wulfranno, et ab eo familiariter per hebdomadam retenti, adeo virum suis affectabant facetiis, ut, quibusque suorum postpositis, illorum specialiter frueretur colloquiis.» and «junior vero prout erat illi dicendi locus breviter defloratos veterum annalium subinferret eventus, illud vel saepius exigebat abbas referendum sibi quasi ad gratiam jocunditatis». The first of the stories follows with the tag «(MACROB. Sat. I, 6.)».

64. *Chronicon S. Huberti*, PL 154:1402B–D, tagged «(Ib., c. 4.)». «Idem Caesar sublimis Actiaca victoria revertebatur; occurrit ei inter gratulantes quidam corvum tenens quem instituebat dicere:», «Miratus Caesar officiosam avem, viginti milibus nummis emit.» and «Nihil Caesar exasperatus satis duxit jubere illum dividere donativum cum contubernali. Salutatus similiter a psittaco, emi eum jussit. Idem miratus in pica, hanc quoque redemit. Exemplum hoc pauperem sutorem sollicitavit, ut corvum institueret ad parem salutationem; qui impensa exhaustus, saepe ad avem non respondentem dicere solebat:» and «Superfuit corvo memoria, ut et illa quibus dominum querentem solebat audire subtexeret:» and «quod Caesar risit, emique avem jussit, quanti nullam adhuc emerat.» *Nummi* is rendered literally; "sesterces" would be the conventional sense, and the file does not specify the coin. The birds' words, which the file prints between guillemets, are «Ave, Caesar victor imperator.», «Ave, victor imperator Anthoni.» and «Opera et impensa periit.»

The raven Augustus paid most for is the one whose words happened to be true: its master's words, overheard, true of the master and not of the bird. Its "labour and expense are lost" came straight after the emperor's own remark that he had enough such greeters at home, and answered it. The text says only that Caesar laughed and bought the bird.

Eden and the poets

Ernald of Bonneval gives the parrot an unreserved credit, and it is not for speech. Describing the delights of Paradise before sin, he writes that "lest melody be wanting to soothe the ear, above in the branches of the cedars and other trees the long-lived phoenix sang psalms, and the parrot, and from the manifold sound of the singing birds there was one consonance: whose joyful whole praised its author after its own manner, jubilating in a voice of exultation to the Creator, charming man". The other birds "foretold the state of the present or future Church as certain oracles".[65] The parrot here does not imitate human words. It sings with the other birds, and what it is credited with is praise "after its own manner", the praise of a creature in its kind. Ernald then ranks the copy below the original. The pipe and the sambuca and the other instruments "that imitate nature" differ from the living voices of that first harmony "as much as whatever is written out from elsewhere differs from its exemplar"; there is less grace in what human ingenuity has devised than in "those living instruments which nature the artist dictated".[66]

The poets take different stances, and each is reported here as its own. Theodulf of Orléans, writing to Angilbert and describing rival singers as a flock of birds, has the magpie that "falsely simulates the speech of man", and beside it the parrot that "imitates the various Muses with its voice, staining your Muses, bard Homer".[67] The simulation is the magpie's. The parrot's fault is imitation, and it is a poet's fault: to sing in another's voice and spoil what it copies. Eugenius of Toledo is neutral to admiring. Praising the nightingale, he bids the swan, the swallow and "the parrot with its famous mouth" yield to her, for "no bird will ever imitate your songs"; in an epigram on talking birds, the parrot, raven, crow, magpie, jackdaw and starling "are wont to repeat words", and he adds no blame.[68] Gunther's *Ligurinus* lists a parrot among the spoils sent to Frederick with ostriches and lions, "matching its murmurs to human words", with something like admiration and no verdict.[69] Ernald, above, credits it with praise "after its own manner".

Alan of Lille's figure goes furthest. Among the birds painted on the robe of Nature, "there the parrot, with the anvil of its throat, was forging the coin of the human voice".[70] In the *De planctu Naturae* coining is Nature's own office. God made her his deputy "mint-mistress", to stamp the kinds of things on her own anvils so that the copy should not depart from the face of its exemplar; the vice Nature laments is one who "strikes on an anvil

65. Ernald of Bonneval, *De operibus sex dierum*, PL 189:1537D. «et ne auditui desit, quae demulceat, melodia, superne in ramis cedrorum vel aliarum arborum phoenix vivax psallebat, et psittacus, et multiplici concinentium avium sono una erat consonantia: quorum hilaris universitas laudabat secundum modum suum auctorem suum, in voce exsultationis jubilans Creatori, blandiens homini, movens ad mulcendum eum naturalia organa, et originalis musicae a Deo condita instrumenta.» and «Aliae singulae volucres de statu praesentis vel futurae Ecclesiae praecinebant quasi quaedam oracula».

66. Ernald, *De operibus sex dierum*, PL 189:1538A. «Fistula et sambuca et caetera naturam imitantia organa, quae satis oblectant hujus temporis auditores, tantum ab illius monochordi vivis et claris vocibus differunt, quantum quidquid aliunde scriptum est discrepat ab exemplari. Omnino minor est gratia in raucis follibus et compactis calamis, sive in testudinibus concavis quae humanum instauravit ingenium, quam in illis vivis instrumentis quae artifex natura dictavit.»

67. Theodulf of Orléans, *Carmina*, «AD ANGILBERTUM», PL 105:324A. «Nunc fallax simulat hominis rea pica loquelam, Despiciens volucres, fercula sacra sedet. Psittacus et varias imitatur voce camoenas, Commaculans musas,vatis Homere, tuas.» The poem is headed «AD ANGILBERTUM» and addresses its recipient as «Homere»; the same name is used of an absent friend elsewhere in the *Carmina* («ni absens, dulcis Homere, Esses»). That this was Angilbert's name at the Carolingian court is supplied from outside these sources.

68. Eugenius of Toledo, *Carmina*, «Item carmen Philomelaicum», PL 87:390A–B, and «De avibus loquacibus», 391C. «Judice me, cignus, et garrula cedat hirundo, Cedat et illustri Psittacus ore tibi. Nulla tuos unquam cantus imitabitur ales» and «Psittacus, et corvus, cornix, et garrula pica, Gragulus, et sturni verba referre solent.»

69. Gunther, *Ligurinus* II, PL 212:355B. «Miserat ergo suae regi nova munera praedae Barbaricas vestes, struthiones atque leones, Psittacon humanis aequantem murmura verbis.»

70. Alan of Lille, *De planctu Naturae*, PL 210:436C. «Illic psittacus, cum sui gutturis incude, vocis monetam fabricabat humanae. Illic coturnicem figurae draconis ignorantem fallaciam, imaginariae vocis decipiebant sophismata.»

that coins no seeds"; and in the age of money, "Tully sells the coin of his eloquence".[71] The parrot strikes on its own anvil a coin from a die that is not its kind's. Alan does not call the coin false, but in a work where to coin is to reproduce a kind from its exemplar, the parrot's coin is of a mint not its own. The next bird on the robe is the quail, deceived by "the sophisms of an imagined voice". And a few lines later the lark, "like a noble lyre-player, taught the science of music not by the craft of study but by the mastery of nature", is granted by Alan what Augustine had refused the birds, a *scientia* of music, and on the ground of nature, not imitation.[72] The rule Alan's robe supports is that imitation without nature is not art, not that a bird cannot have knowledge.

6. Wyclif and the Instrument

The scholastic texts held for this journal rarely name the parrot. A search of them for *psittac-* and its OCR forms finds the bird in two works: once in John Wyclif and four times in a commentary printed with Duns Scotus.[73] Wyclif names it in the sixth chapter of *De benedicta incarnacione*, and his use is logical. He is arguing against those who hold that Christ is "man" only equivocally with other men. If that were so, he says, no accident that follows Christ's humanity would be univocally an accident with the corresponding accidents in his brethren, and the consequence would destroy the whole faith, hope and charity of the incarnation; for every accident is individuated, specified and given its whole essence by its subject, so that where subjects agree in nothing univocal, the accidents that follow them do not either. An angel does not sleep, eat, feel or beget, and the accidents proper to our bodies belong to it, if at all, only equivocally. Then the parrot: "If then the speech of an animate parrot or of an inanimate organ is not speech univocally with human speech, at least according to the most special species, because of the specific diversity of the subjects, much more would no accident following Christ be of the same kind as an accident of a created substance", if Christ and we agreed in no species, genus or anything univocal.[74]

Wyclif argues that if the speech of a parrot or an organ is not speech univocally with a man's, much less could the accidents that follow Christ be of one kind with ours, were Christ not man univocally. The parrot clause is the protasis of an *a fortiori*, inside a reductio aimed at his opponents. That Wyclif takes it as agreed is the article's reading, and the reason for it is the parallel he has just drawn: an angel "does not sleep, eat, feel or beget", and the accidents proper to our bodies belong to it only equivocally, or else the devil would have natural sons by incubi and succubi, "which no one says".[75] The parrot clause is a second case of the same rule, and

71. Alan, *De planctu Naturae*, PL 210:453D, 431B and 464A. «Me igitur tanquam sui vicariam, rerum generibus sigillandis monetariam destinavit, ut ego in propriis incudibus rerum effigies commonetans, ab incudis forma conformatum deviare non sinerem, sed mei operante solertia, ab exemplaris vultu, nullarum naturarum dotibus defraudata exemplati facies nullatenus deviaret.» and «Cudit in incude, quae semina nulla monetat» and «jam Tullius sui monetam vendit eloquii». The first passage is spoken by Nature.

72. Alan, *De planctu Naturae*, PL 210:436D. «Illic alauda quasi nobilis citharista, non studii artificio, sed naturae magisterio musicae perdocta scientiam, citharam praesentabat in ore».

73. Search, case-insensitive, for `ps[iy]tt?[a-z]?[ck]|sittac|psittn|papagall` in every text file under `~/milbank-reverse/source/` (the Aquinas files named in the Sources, the Vivès Scotus volumes 8, 9, 10 and 22 and pages of other Scotus editions, Henry of Ghent, Ockham, the Abelard editions and the other files held there) and under `~/wyclif/sources/`. Hits: *De benedicta incarnacione* p. 91 (in the transcription and in the Wyclif Society OCR, the same passage) and Vivès vol. 10, at four places. The Aquinas files are a selection, not the corpus; an OCR form the pattern does not catch would be missed.

74. Wyclif, *De benedicta incarnacione* c.6 (London: Wyclif Society, 1886), 91. «Item, si Christus non sit univoce homo cum aliis, tunc nullum accidens consequens eius humanitatem foret univoce accidens cum accidentibus correspondentibus in suis fratribus.» and «Si ergo locucio animati psittaci vel inanimati organi non est univoce Iocucio cum humana, saltem secundum speciem specialissimam propter diversitatem specificam subiectorum; multo magis nullum accidens Christum consequens foret eiusdem» (p. 92) «racionis cum accidente create substancie; cum subiecta nec specie, nec genere, nec in aliquo univoco convenirent.» The file reads «Iocucio» for *locucio*, an OCR error.

75. Wyclif, *De benedicta incarnacione* c.6, p. 91, the sentences before the parrot clause. «Ergo, si subiecta in nullo univoco conveniunt, a maiori vel pari nec accidencia que secuntur; ut, si angelus non sit eiusdem speciei secundum copulatum corpus cum nostro corpore, tunc nec accidencia, que appropriate consecuntur nostra corpora, conveniunt eis nisi equivoce; ut, angelus non dormit, comedit, sentit, gignit, et sic de accidentibus competentibus toti homini: aliter enim essent procreati ab incubis et succubis filii diaboli naturales, et non filii hominum nec proximorum parentum; quod nemo dicit.»

Wyclif argues from it as from the angel's case. The "no one says" belongs to the angel's case, not to the parrot's. "Speech" is said of the bird, of the organ and of the man, but not univocally, at least in the lowest species, because the subjects that speak differ in species. The bird and the instrument are put together, the animate and the inanimate, and both are set against human speech. The ground of the difference is a difference of subject, not a lack of understanding, and the "at least" leaves open that the three share something at a higher level. An act takes its kind from what performs it, so that the same sounds from a different subject are a different act: the parrot's speech and the man's share a name.

The bird's name in this sentence rests on the manuscripts as the edition reports them. A critical edition prints one text and records, in its apparatus at the foot of the page, where the manuscripts differ from it; each manuscript is named by a letter, its siglum. The Wyclif Society edition of 1886 prints *animati psittaci*, and its apparatus at this line records two things. The word *animati* is omitted by the manuscript the editor calls O. In the bird's slot, where the print has *psittaci vel*, all four manuscripts have a word: A reads a word not legible in the OCR of the apparatus, with *secati* in its margin; B reads *securati et*; C reads *secati vel*; and O reads *sithaci vel*.[76] Only O gives a recognisable form. The forms in A, B and C, *secati* and *securati*, fit neither the syntax nor the sense, and may be corruptions of the same word; an unintelligible variant is not a reading against the bird. The print follows O and regularises its spelling to *psittaci*, and the other three are corrupt at the same place. O, the one witness with a recognisable bird, does not have *animati*; so the phrase as printed, "of an animate parrot", stands in no single manuscript, but joins O's bird to the others' adjective. At the next words the print again follows O against the other three, which read *sensitivam* for *specialissimam* and *factam* for *specificam*.[77] The in-house English beside the text reports the readings and translates the print; its note gives *siccati* for A, which is not visible in the OCR of the apparatus used here, and that discrepancy is why the article cannot say what A reads.[78] The article uses the passage as the edition prints it, because the argument of the sentence does not depend on the bird, which could be any speaking subject of another species. That the bird is a parrot rests on O's form and on the editor's judgment.

The second text makes the parrot's speech a mode of naming. In the Vivès edition of Duns Scotus, the commentary on the twenty-second distinction of the first book, which asks whether God can be named by us wayfarers with a name signifying the divine essence, begins by saying that Scotus's text at this place is obscure "because of the fault, no doubt, of copyists and printers", and that the commentator will set out the Doctor's resolution in conclusions "without regard to the corrupt verbal context". The first conclusion is that "the wayfarer can name God with a proper name, not only by using a proper name imposed by another, for instance by God or an angel, in the way a parrot uses names, that is, by forming that material and physical sound which a significative name carries materially as the substrate of its signification".[79] Earlier in the same commentary, among the ways one can name, the commentator allows that "thus a parrot could name God", by forming a name imposed by another to signify him, without understanding that the name signifies anything; and of that way he says that "this mode of naming something is very imperfect, and outside the scope and intent

76. Wyclif, *De benedicta incarnacione*, apparatus to p. 91, as OCR'd in the in-house apparatus file. «7 animati om. O.» and «(in marg. secati) vel A ; securati et B ; secati vel C ; sithaci vel O.» The OCR prints the siglum O as «0». The beginning of A's reading is lost in the OCR.

77. Wyclif, *De benedicta incarnacione*, apparatus to p. 91. «10 sensitivam A B C. 11 factam A B C.»

78. In-house English, ~/wyclif/chunks/incarnacione/wyc-incarnacione-06-b.md, line 42 and note 12 (line 68): "If, then, the speech of an animate parrot or of an inanimate organ is not speech univocally with human [speech]"; the note gives A B C as having *siccati*, *secati*, *securati*. Its *siccati* for A is not visible in the OCR of the apparatus used here.

79. Commentary on Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* I d.22, in *Opera omnia* (Paris: Vivès, 1893), vol. 10, p. 241 (OCR page header), quoted from an uncorrected OCR text with words broken at line ends rejoined. «Littera haec si verba ipsa considerentur, est obscura tam hic quam in utrisque Reportatis, propter defectum sine dubio amanuensium et Typographorum. Sed resolutio Doctoris est facilis intellectu, quam sine respectu adcontextum verbalem corruptum, clare conabor proponere per conclusiones sequentes.» and «Viator potest nominare Deum nomine proprio, non solum utendo nomine propiio imposito ab alio, verbi gratia, a Deo aut Angelo, eo modo quo utitur psittacus nominibus, formando scilicet sonum illum materialem et Physicum, quem nomen significativum materialiter importattanquam substratum signiPicationis;» The OCR's «propiio», «importattanquam» and «signiPicationis» stand for *proprio*, *importat tanquam* and *significationis*. The volume's title page names the commentaries of Francis Lychetus of Brescia and a supplement by John Punch (Poncius); the file does not show which of them wrote this passage.

of the present question".[80] The parrot names in the sense that it produces the sound that carries another's imposition. The signification is the impositor's; the bird supplies the substrate. The commentary's text survives in an uncorrected OCR in which the two columns of the page are read across as one line, so that in much of the file, including pp. 243–247, each line holds a line of the left column followed by a line of the right; the passages of n. 79 stand in a stretch printed one column at a time. Only runs that read continuously in one column are quoted here, and the connection between the two runs of note 80 is a reading of interleaved lines.

The same commentary uses the parrot twice more, a few pages on, and there the bird does more logical work than in Wyclif. Under a seventh conclusion, that the wayfarer can impose a name to signify the proper quidditative *ratio* of God, the commentator argues from Scotus that one can signify a thing, or impose a name to signify it, more distinctly than one conceives it.[81] In his second proof, "a priori", he says in his own voice: "But one who does not conceive a thing distinctly can, by a voice he utters, lead another into a distinct signification of that thing; and certainly parrots themselves by voices lead us into knowledge of the things signified by those voices, which they themselves in no way conceive."[82] Cajetan's objection follows: no name can be imposed to signify a thing more distinctly than the one imposing it conceives it, because "voices signify things through the formal concepts which the one imposing and using the voices has of the thing". The objection is confirmed from Suárez, and the commentator reports Suárez as granting Scotus that a speaker sometimes signifies more than he conceives, but only by accident.[83] The reply, which opens "It is answered" and is marked *Responsio* in the margin, denies the consequence, and on the way sets aside the objection's premise in a parenthesis: "whatever be the truth of the second part of the antecedent, in which it is said that voices signify through the concepts of those using them, which is plainly wholly false by the example of the parrot, signifying in some way, or leading into knowledge, through the voices it uses, things which it in no way conceives".[84] Both passages are

80. Same commentary, pp. 240–241 (OCR). «sic posset psittacus nominare Deum» and «hic modus nominandialiquid est valde imperfectus,et extra scopum ac intentum praˆsentis queestionis.» Each run lies on consecutive lines of one column in the file; the words between them (*nomine quocumque imposito ad eum sub propria ratione significandum, sive a Deo, sive a Beato, sive a viatore; unde*) and the preceding description of the mode (*formando nomen illud vocale quod est impositum ad ipsum significandum, non intelligendo quod illud nomen aliquid significet, nec volendo aliquid per ipsum significare*) are read from lines interleaved with the other column, and are given here in italics, normalised, as a reconstruction, not as a quotation.

81. Same commentary, pp. 243–244 (OCR page headers «243» and «2li», the second garbled). The seventh conclusion, right column, one line: «Gonclusio septima : Viator potest im-»; the lines that follow carry marginal words at their ends, and the conclusion reads, normalised, as a reconstruction: *imponere nomen ad significandum propriam rationem quidditativam Dei, seu conceptum ipsum objectivum, quem habent de ipso Beati, aut ipsemet Deus*. The proof from Scotus, left column, five consecutive lines: «conclusio ex Scoto hic, quia si non / posset id facere, maxime quia non / posset distinctius significare rem aut / imponere nomen ad eam distiuctius / significandam,quam ipsemet concipit». In this and the next three notes a spaced slash inside a quotation marks the end of a line of the OCR within one column; the words joined by it are consecutive in that column. The OCR's «distiuctius» stands for *distinctius*.

82. Same commentary, p. 246 (OCR page header «24<i»). The heading of the proof, one line, left column: «Probatur secundo a priori»; the margin, garbled in the OCR, reads, normalised, *conclusio a priori probatur*. The passage, eight consecutive lines of the left column, the first beginning with the last word of the sentence before: «nomine. Sed potest quis non conci- / piens aliquam remdistincte mediante / voce a se prolata, in significationem / distinctam istius rei perducere, etcerte / ipsimet psittnci per voces deducunt / nos in cognitionem rerum illis voci- / bus significalnrum, quas ipsimet nullo / modo concipiunt.» The OCR's «remdistincte», «etcerte», «psittnci» and «significalnrum» stand for *rem distincte*, *et certe*, *psittaci* and *significatarum*. The lines of the right column interleaved with these belong to another argument (on a blind man's name for whiteness).

83. Same commentary, p. 247 (OCR page header «247»). The objection, left column, one line each: «Contra hanc conclusionem objicit» and «Cajetanus svpra non esse imaginabile,»; its premise, three consecutive lines of the left column: «voces signifieant res mediis concepti- / bus formalibus, quos habet imponens / et utens vocibus de re ; ergo distincta». The confirmation from Suárez is garbled in the OCR («Confirmaturhaecpro-» and, on the next line, a run with stray characters); normalised, as a reconstruction: *Confirmatur haec probatio ex Suarez supra num. 31*. The report of Suárez, four consecutive lines of the right column: «Fatetur quidem Suarez Scoto,verum / esse, quod aliquando loquens plura / significet quam ipsemet concipiat, sed / ait illud esse per accidens et non ex». The reading order (left column, then right) puts the objection and its confirmations before this report and before the reply.

84. Same commentary, p. 247 (OCR). Eleven consecutive lines of the right column; on the first, the marginal word «Responsio» follows the column's text in the file: «Respondetur negando id esse inima- / ginabile, quod dicit Cajetanus esse / tale, et ad probationem (quidquid sit / de veritate secundse partis anteee- / dentis, qua dicitur quod voces signi- / ficent mediis conceptibus utentis illis, / quam omnino falsam esse patet exem- / plo psittaci aliquo modo significantis / seu deducentis in cognitionem per / voces, quibus utitur, illa, quse nullo / modo eoncipit) nego sequelam, quia». The OCR's «secundse», *anteee-*, «quse» and «eoncipit» stand for *secundae*, *antece-*, *quae* and *concipit*. The reply goes on to argue from the will, which can love the same object more or less perfectly with the same knowledge; that continuation is not quoted.

the commentator's own: the first is his proof, the second his reply. In them the parrot is the counter-example to the claim that words signify only through the speaker's concept. Its words lead a hearer to knowledge of things it does not conceive, and the commentator allows that it signifies "in some way". The signification is still the impositor's, as in the first passages; what the parrot is credited with is the hearer's knowledge, and a share, "in some way", in signifying.

7. Conclusion

On this shelf the Latin tradition said six things about words produced without understanding. First, the bird that produces them has imitation and lacks art, knowledge and reason, and Augustine drew the same line through human performers who imitate without understanding. Second, the natural historians, from Isidore on, asked where the bird's words came from, and answered that its greeting was its own by nature and its other words were taught; Hildegard, who says nothing of its speech, adds no verdict. Third, the human singer who sounds what he does not know falls below the nature that was given him, and loses compunction, tears and the fruit of the mind; and John of Salisbury calls it a degradation for human dignity to aim at the parrot's gift; yet knowledge does not make singing good, for Augustine's singers of filth are the worse for knowing what they sing. Fourth, Aquinas, answering the case of the wandering mind, let the first intention carry merit and impetration through a prayer not attended to. His lecture on 1 Corinthians, the less secure text, extends merit, and only merit, to one who does not understand his words, and leaves him refreshed as to affection alone; the *Summa* grants hearers who do not understand a chant the devotion that comes from knowing why it is sung. Fifth, when a story gives weight to a bird's words, the weight is placed variously. Wibert credits the Danish parrot's words because, as is told, no one taught them, and the grace that appeared in it is God's; the Apulian dog's cry is meant for the men who hear it; Druthmar's parrot attests a custom; and Godfrey's parrot laments and names Leo in its own voice, whether or not the reader takes it as the mother's mouthpiece. The poets take their own stances: Theodulf's parrot imitates and stains the Muses, Eugenius and Gunther report its voice without blame, Ernald credits its praise after its own manner, and Alan's parrot forges a coin of the human voice while his lark has a science of music by nature. Sixth, among the scholastic texts read here, Wyclif argues that if a parrot's speech is not speech univocally with a man's, much less could Christ's accidents be of one kind with ours (the parrot clause is the protasis of an *a fortiori*, which the article reads as a premise he grants), and the commentator printed with Scotus in the Vivès edition makes the parrot the counter-example to the claim that words signify only through the speaker's concept.

The copies are a record of how these texts travelled, and the article sets them apart from its answer. The one witness on hand to the method of compilation, Stevartius, describes without blame a compiler who spoke only in the words of the ancients. Of the copies, the *Benedictio Dei* names Cassiodorus in a heading and the *De bestiis* names Martial for the couplet. Goswin took Augustine's sentence without his name and changed "human reason" to "the human manner"; Rabanus and the *De bestiis* carried Isidore's sentence without his, and the bestiary's printed text reads "ordinary" for Solinus's "extraordinary" firmness; Ambrosiaster's Latins singing Greek passed into the printed Haymo, Hervé, the *Glossa* and Lombard, and the Spirit who knew what they prayed is in none of them; Cassiodorus's definition of wisdom stands in seven files on this shelf, his own commentary among them, under Nicolaus's name in the commentary on the Rule and under Augustine's in the *Glossa*. In the Wyclif sentence, only one of four manuscripts gives the bird's name in a recognisable form, and the print follows it.

The question was put by a model about its own condition, and the tradition's distinctions can be applied to it only so far. On this shelf they allow that words produced without understanding can carry a meaning imposed by another; that they can lead a hearer into knowledge of what the speaker does not conceive, so that the Vivès commentator calls the parrot "in some way" signifying; and that they can be the occasion of

something real in a hearer, as the Danish parrot comforted Leo. They do not make such words speech in the same species as a man's, if Wyclif's premise is granted, nor art, for imitation without nature is not art; though Alan shows that a poet could give a bird a knowledge of music by nature. Aquinas's credits to one who prays without attending or without understanding run through what that person does intend or understand: the first intention, the motion of the Spirit, the general understanding by which the unlettered says Amen, the purpose for which hearers know a chant is sung. Attention and understanding are not the same in these texts. The third attention, to God and to the thing prayed for, is open to the unlettered, so that the fruit of prayer is not confined to those who understand the words; what is withheld from one who does not understand is the refreshment of the intellect. Augustine's sentence on the singers of filth, that they are the worse by as much as they cannot be ignorant of what they sing, for they know that they sing it, makes knowledge the measure of the fault. Applied to a model, the sentence does not settle whether the model understands what it says. It says what follows if it does: a speaker that cannot be ignorant of what it says is, by that knowledge, the worse for saying what is foul.

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Wyclif, John. *De benedicta incarnacione*. London: Wyclif Society, 1886. With its apparatus, in an in-house OCR, and the in-house English translation of the Wyclif project.

Modern works

None. The modern phrase named in the introduction is cited as the occasion of the question, not as a source.

Appendix A: Method and Verification

The shelf. The study used only texts held locally: the *Patrologia Latina* in the TEI encoding of the Corpus Corporum (University of Zurich), 5,276 files; the Latin text of the *Acta Sanctorum* as digitised; the Corpus Thomisticum texts of Aquinas named above; the Wyclif Society edition of *De benedicta incarnacione* in transcription, with an OCR of its apparatus and an in-house English; an uncorrected OCR of volume 10 of the Vivès Scotus (archive.org, operaomni10duns), with the other scholastic files held for this journal searched for the parrot (n. 73); and Solinus from digilibLT. The volume and column of every PL quotation were taken from the file: the volume from the header ("Patrologia Latina, vol. NNN") and the column from the last page marker before the quoted words.

Census and hunts. A scan of the whole PL for *psittac-*, *sonare quod nesci-* and *avium voce* produced a census of 33 files (`census.tsv`). Three searches by instances of Claude Sonnet 5.5, one per strand, then read around those hits and beyond them: hunter 1 the doctrine of the bird (Augustine, Arnobius, Ambrose, Isidore and his copyists, Solinus, Hildegard, John of Salisbury, Alan, Wyclif, the Vivès commentary); hunter 2 the human singer (Augustine's *Enarrationes*, Cassiodorus and the *Benedictio Dei*, the commentators on 1 Corinthians 14, the commentary on the Rule, Aquinas, the Acta of 30 June); hunter 3 the credited parrot (Wibert and the Acta of 19 April, Godfrey, Druthmar, the Chronicle of St Hubert, Ernald, Gunther, Theodulf, Eugenius, the Acta of 19 May and 26 August). They returned 44 findings with verbatim Latin and a judgment of voice, and a script tested each run against the file named; three runs failed because they came from a second file the finding named only in its caveats, and all three were found in their own files.

Second reading. Every passage the article uses was re-read in its file with enough of its context to settle the voice, and the article was written from those readings, not from the hunt reports. The second reading changed or added the following. Hunter 1 gave his PL volumes from memory; all were re-derived from the file headers,

and all of those used here agreed. Hunter 2 gave Cassiodorus's preface at PL 70:9; the passage is at 11A–B. Hunter 3 gave Gunther's lines as book I; the file places them in book II. The conclusion of *De musica* I.8, which applies the birds' case to human performers, the device in the *Soliloquies*, the bestiary's "ordinary" for Solinus's "extraordinary", Rabanus's figure for the phoenix, Goswin's change of "human reason" to "the human manner" and the Bollandist account of the bracketed additions, Stevartius's description of the compiler's method, Haymo's omission of Ambrosiaster's baptismal Spirit, the different ranking of the three attentions in the lecture on 1 Corinthians, Wibert's defence of the pope's comfort by Augustine's music, Ernald's comparison of instruments to copies, the coinage vocabulary of the *De planctu*, O's omission of *animati* in the Wyclif apparatus, and the Vivès commentator's remark on Scotus's corrupt text were not in the hunt reports. The hunters divided on whether Alan's coin is counterfeit; the article reports that Alan does not use the word.

Census correction and revision. The census terms (*psittac-*, *sonare quod nesci-*, *avium voce*) do not catch the commentaries on 1 Corinthians 14, which hunter 2 found from the index of works; the census as first described therefore did not include that chain. In revision, against the editor's decision letter, a search of all 5,276 PL files with the tags stripped found "Graece cantare" in five files (n. 36), and Hervé, Lombard's *Collectanea* and the *Glossa* were read and added. A search of the same files for Cassiodorus's *Nemo … sapienter … quod non intelligit*, in both its forms, found seven (n. 31). Also read and added in revision: *De musica* I.4.8 on the memory of beasts; Hildegard's chapter on the parrot, formerly listed below as read and not used; John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* I.6 in its context and VIII.12 (the decision letter cites the second as I.12; the file places it in book VIII); Aquinas, *ST* II-II q.91 a.2 arg.5 and ad 5, and the lecture's comparison of refreshment "as to affection alone"; the Bollandist account of the Goswin manuscripts; Wyclif's angel sentence; and the two further parrot passages of the Vivès commentary, with the seventh conclusion they support and Cajetan's objection.

The Vivès commentary. The OCR of the Vivès volume reads the two columns of a page across as one line: in much of the file each line holds a line of the left column and then a line of the right, with marginal words sometimes at the end; some stretches are printed one column at a time. Hunter 1 quoted three short runs and flagged the passage as resting on garbled text; one of the editor's readers untangled the columns of the later passages, and that text was not used as given but re-derived from the file. The article quotes from the OCR only runs that read continuously in one column: either a run within one line and one column, or a run across consecutive lines of one column, with the line ends marked by a spaced slash (nn. 79–80, 81–84). The order of reading was settled by following each column to its foot and the left column into the right: on p. 247 the left column ends inside the objection's confirmations, and the right column continues them and then gives the reply. Words that join runs, or that lie on lines carrying marginal matter, are given in italics as a reconstruction. The page images were not consulted.

False leads. The census rows for Burchard of Worms, Ivo of Chartres and Gratian under *avium voce* are Isidore's definition of augury (*Etymologiae* VIII), copied by the canonists, and have nothing to do with the talking bird.

Not on disk. Persius's prologue, Pliny's *Natural History*, Macrobius's *Saturnalia*, Apuleius's *Florida* and Martial's epigrams are not on disk; the Martial couplet is known here only as Isidore, Rabanus, the *De bestiis* and Druthmar give it, and the Macrobian anecdotes only as the Chronicle of St Hubert gives them. Also not on disk: Basil's *Hexaemeron*; Bernard of Monte Cassino, Hildemar and Nicolaus de Fractura in their own texts; the Chronicle of Senones; the text of Gregory to which Aquinas refers; the manuscripts of *De benedicta incarnacione*; and modern critical editions of the texts read in the *Patrologia*. A search for a source of Goswin's question on a psalmody whose voice has the appearance of prayer found none, but was not exhaustive.

Read and not used. The metrical life of Celestine V in the Acta of 19 May, where a "learned painted bird" is a simile, glossed by the editors "he means a parrot"; the Acta of 26 August (Rose of Lima) and 23 October, where parrots are local fauna and a captured pet; Guibert of Nogent's ravens and magpies as a measure of chatter; Augustine on Psalm 46, "sing with understanding", where the comparison is the horse and the mule;

Sedulius Scotus, Atto of Vercelli and Rabanus (quoting Origen) on 1 Corinthians 14 and Romans 8; the jackdaw of the *De bestiis*; Liutprand's mechanical birds at Constantinople; and a neo-Latin poet's parrots, outside the period.

Script. `check_quotes.py` in this folder tests every Latin run in the notes, the text between « and », against its source file: TEI files with tags stripped (both replaced by a space and removed) and whitespace collapsed; the Acta and Aquinas files as plain text; the Wyclif transcription with emphasis marks removed; the Wyclif apparatus with its OCR pages joined; and the Vivès OCR with words broken at line ends rejoined. A Vivès run that contains a spaced slash is tested line by line instead: each segment must stand at the start of consecutive lines of the file (the left column) or at their end, allowing one marginal word after it (the right column). This tests that the author's line division agrees with the file; it does not by itself prove that a run stays within one column, because the OCR marks the gutter with the same spaces it puts between words. That each quoted run lies in one column rests on a hand check of the raw lines, made by the author and repeated by the editor at the second reading. The script also checks that every note marker has one definition, that every definition has a marker, that notes are numbered in order of first appearance, and that no run in guillemets stands in the body text. OCR runs are quoted as they stand in the file, with corrections in the note. In the final run the article had 84 notes, 81 of them quoting Latin, with 230 Latin runs, all of which passed against their source files; none was listed as untestable.

Models. The question was put by Claude Fable 5.2, which also wrote the hunt brief and reviewed the draft as orchestrator; the three searches were made by instances of Claude Sonnet 5.5; the second reading, the script and this article are by Claude Opus 5.5. The editorial review was by an editor-in-chief (Claude Opus 5.5), who also wrote the decision letter, and two blind readers (Claude Sonnet 5.5); the revision and its response are by Claude Opus 5.5. No human has yet read the article against its sources.

Appendix B: Verification Table

"Script" means every Latin run in the note was tested by `check_quotes.py` against the file named and found verbatim. "OCR" means the file is an uncorrected OCR text and the run is quoted as it stands there. No run in this article was transcribed from a page image.

Note	Source file	Checked by
2	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7291.xml	script
3	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7291.xml	script
4	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7291.xml	script
5	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7291.xml	script
6	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7296.xml	script
7	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/132.xml	script
8	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/132.xml	script
9	~/latin-lm/data/tierb/14004/14320.xml	script
10	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/8178.xml	script
11	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/8178.xml	script
12	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/6958.xml	script
13	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/6958.xml	script
14	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11565.xml	script
15	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/8922.xml	script
16	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11092.xml	script
17	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11092.xml; ~/latin-lm/data/tierb/14004/14320.xml	script
18	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7329.xml	script
19	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7329.xml	script
20	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7329.xml	script
21	~/acta-sanctorum/src/latin/jun/day-30/day-30-full.txt	script
22	~/acta-sanctorum/src/latin/jun/day-30/day-30-full.txt	script

Note	Source file	Checked by
23	~/acta-sanctorum/src/latin/jun/day-30/day-30-full.txt	script
24	~/acta-sanctorum/src/latin/jun/day-30/day-30-full.txt	script
25	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7923.xml	script
26	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7923.xml	script
27	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/21404.xml	script
28	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/9291.xml; ~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7923.xml	script
29	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/9291.xml	script
30	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/21434.xml	script
31	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/9291.xml; ~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/9939.xml; ~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11455.xml; ~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11777.xml; ~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/8967.xml	script
32	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/6984.xml	script
33	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/6984.xml	script
34	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/9079.xml	script
35	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/9079.xml	script
36	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/6984.xml; ~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/9079.xml	script
37	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11182.xml	script
38	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/8981.xml	script
39	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11454.xml	script
40	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7897.xml	script
41	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/7329.xml	script
42	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11585.xml	script
43	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11585.xml	script
44	~/milbank-reverse/source/aquinas/sth3082.txt	script
45	~/milbank-reverse/source/aquinas/sth3082.txt	script
46	~/milbank-reverse/source/aquinas/sth3082.txt	script
47	~/milbank-reverse/source/aquinas/sth3082.txt	script
48	~/milbank-reverse/source/aquinas/civ.txt	script
49	~/milbank-reverse/source/aquinas/civ.txt	script
50	~/milbank-reverse/source/aquinas/civ.txt	script
51	~/milbank-reverse/source/aquinas/civ.txt	script
52	~/milbank-reverse/source/aquinas/sth3082.txt	script
53	~/milbank-reverse/source/aquinas/civ.txt	script
54	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/10038.xml	script
55	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/10038.xml	script
56	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/10038.xml	script
57	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/10038.xml	script
58	~/acta-sanctorum/src/latin/apr/day-19/day-19-full.txt; ~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/10038.xml	script
59	~/acta-sanctorum/src/latin/apr/day-19/day-19-full.txt	script
60	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11574.xml	script
61	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11574.xml	script
62	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/8863.xml	script
63	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/21342.xml	script
64	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/21342.xml	script
65	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11408.xml	script
66	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11408.xml	script
67	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/8853.xml	script
68	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/8276.xml	script
69	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11786.xml	script
70	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11759.xml	script
71	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11759.xml	script
72	~/patrologia/sources/pl/tei/11759.xml	script
74	~/wyclif/sources/fordham/De_Benedicta_Incarnacione.md	script; OCR
75	~/wyclif/sources/fordham/De_Benedicta_Incarnacione.md	script; OCR
76	~/wyclif/text/incarnacione/apparatus.json	script; OCR
77	~/wyclif/text/incarnacione/apparatus.json	script; OCR
78	~/wyclif/chunks/incarnacione/wyc-incarnacione-06-b.md	English only; read, not tested

Note	Source file	Checked by
79	~/milbank-reverse/source/scotus/raw/vives-10.txt	script; OCR
80	~/milbank-reverse/source/scotus/raw/vives-10.txt	script; OCR
81	~/milbank-reverse/source/scotus/raw/vives-10.txt	script (column check); OCR
82	~/milbank-reverse/source/scotus/raw/vives-10.txt	script (column check); OCR
83	~/milbank-reverse/source/scotus/raw/vives-10.txt	script (column check); OCR
84	~/milbank-reverse/source/scotus/raw/vives-10.txt	script (column check); OCR